







7 JUL 52

# IRENE.

A

TRAGEDY,

BY SAMUEL JOHNSON, L.L.D.

ADAPTED FOR

THEATRICAL REPRESENTATION,

AS PERFORMED AT

THE THEATRE-ROYAL, DRURY LANE.

REGULATED FROM THE PROMPT-BOOK,

*By Permission of the Manager.*

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The Lines distinguished by inverted Commas, are omitted in the Representation ; and those printed in Italics are the Additions of the Theatre.

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## IRENE.

By SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL.D.

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THIS is the only dramatic piece among all the writings of this excellent author. It is founded on the celebrated story of the Sultan Mahomet, who being reproved by his Grandees for giving too indulgent a loose to his passion for a beautiful Greek named *Irene*, who was his favourite mistress, to the neglect of his state affairs, and the prejudice of his empire, took off her head with his own hand in their presence, as an atonement for his fault. Dr. Johnson, however, has taken some trifling liberties with the history—*Irene* being here made to be strangled by order of the emperor, instead of dying by his own hand. The unities of time, place, and action, are most rigidly kept up, the whole coming within the time of performance, and the scene which is a garden of the Seraglio, remaining unmoved through the whole play. The language of it is, like all the rest of Dr. Johnson's writings, nervous, sentimental, and poetical. Yet, notwithstanding these perfections, though assisted by the united powers of Mr. Garrick, Mr. Barry, Mrs. Pritchard, and Mrs. Cibber, all together in one play, it did not meet with the success it merited, and might therefore justly have expected.

*Acted at Drury-Lane,  
Sept. 1749.*

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## PROLOGUE.

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*YE glitt'ring train! whom lace and velvet bless,  
Suspend the soft solitudes of dress ;  
From grow'ling business and superfluous care,  
Ye sons of Avarice! a moment spare :  
Vot'ries of fame, and worshippers of power !  
Dismiss the pleasing phantoms for an hour.  
Our daring Bard, with spirit unconfin'd,  
Spreads wide the mighty moral for mankind.  
Learn here how Heaven supports the virtuous mind,  
Daring, though calm ; and vigorous though resign'd.  
Learn here, what anguish racks the guilty breast,  
In power dependent, in success deprest.  
Learn here that peace from innocence must flow ;  
All else is empty sound, and idle show.*

*If truths like these with pleasing language join ;  
Ennobled, yet unchang'd, if Nature shine :  
If no wild draught depart from reason's rules,  
Nor gods his heroes, nor his lovers fools :  
Intriguing wits ! his artless plot forgive ;  
And spare him, beauties ! though his lovers live.*

*Be this at least his praise ; be this his pride ;  
To force applause no modern arts are try'd.  
Should partial Cat-calls all his hopes confound,  
He bids no trumpet quell the fatal sound.  
Should welcome sleep relieve the weary wit,  
He rolls no thunders o'er the drowsy Pit.*

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*No snares to captivate the judgment spreads ;  
Nor bribes your eyes to prejudice your heads.  
Unmov'd though wittings sneer and rivals rail ;  
Studious to please, yet not asham'd to fail.  
He scorns the meek address, the suppliant strain,  
With merit needless, and without it vain.  
In reason, nature, truth he dares to trust ;  
Ye fops be silent ! and ye wits be just !*

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*Dramatis Personæ.*

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*MEN,*

MAHOMET, Emperor of the Turks.

CALI BASSA, First Visier.

MUSTAPHA, a Turkish Aga.

ABDALLA, an Officer.

HASAN and CARAZA, Turkish Captains.

DEMETRIUS and LEONTIUS, Greek Noblemen.

MURZA, an Eunuch.

*WOMEN.*

ASPASIA and IRENE, Greek Ladies.

Attendants on Irene.

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## I R E N E.

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### *ACT I. SCENE I.*

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DEMETRIUS and LEONTIUS in Turkish Habits.

*Leontius.*

AND is it thus Demetrius meets his friend,  
Hid in the mean disguise of Turkish robes,  
With servile secrecy to lurk in shades  
And vent our suff'rings in clandestine groans?

*Dem.* Till breathless fury rested from destruction  
These groans were fatal, these disguises vain :  
But now our Turkish conquerors have quench'd  
Their rage, and pall'd their appetite of murder ;  
No more the glutted sabre thirsts for blood,  
And weary cruelty remits her tortures.

*Leo.* Yet Greece enjoys no gleam of transient hope,  
No soothing interval of peaceful sorrow ;  
The lust of gold succeeds the rage of conquest,  
The lust of gold, unfeeling and remorseless !  
The last corruption of degenerate man !  
Urg'd by th' imperious soldier's fierce command,  
The groaning Greeks break up their golden caverns  
Pregnant with stores, that India's mines might envy  
Th' accumulated wealth of toiling ages.

*Dem.* That wealth, too sacred for their country's use !  
 That wealth, too pleasing to be lost for freedom !  
 That wealth, which granted to their weeping prince,  
 Had rang'd embattled nations at our gates :  
 But thus reserv'd to lure the wolves of Turkey,  
 Adds shame to grief, and infamy to ruin.  
 Lamenting av'rice now too late discovers  
 Her own neglected, in the public safety.

*Leo.* Reproach not misery.—The sons of Greece,  
 Ill-fated race ! so oft besieg'd in vain,  
 With false security beheld invasion.  
 Why should they fear ?—That Power that kindly spreads  
 The clouds, a signal of impending showers,  
 To warn the wand'ring linnet to the shade,  
 Beheld, without concern, expiring Greece,  
 And not one prodigy foretold our fate.

*Dem.* A thousand horrid prodigies foretold it.  
 A feeble government, eluded laws,  
 A factious populace, luxurious nobles,  
 And all the maladies of sinking states.  
 When public villany, too strong for justice,  
 Shows his bold front, the harbinger of ruin,  
 Can brave Leontius call for airy wonders,  
 Which cheats interpret, and which fools regard ?  
 When some neglected fabric nods beneath  
 The weight of years, and totter to the tempest,  
 Must Heaven dispatch the messengers of light,  
 Or wake the dead to warn us of its fall ?

*Leo.* Well might the weakness of our empire sink  
 Before such foes of more than human force ;  
 Some power invisible, from heaven or hell,  
 Conducts their armies and asserts their cause.

*Dem.* And yet, my friend, what miracles were wrought,

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Beyond the power of constancy and courage ?  
Did unresisted lightning aid their cannon ?  
Did roaring whirlwinds sweep us from the ramparts ?  
'T was vice that shook our nerves, 't was vice, Leontius,  
That froze our veins, and wither'd all our powers.

*Leo.* Whate'er our crimes, our woes demand compassion.  
Each night protected by the friendly darkness,  
Quitting my close retreat, I range the city,  
And weeping, kiss the venerable ruins :  
With silent pangs I view the tow'ring domes,  
Sacred to prayer, and wander through the streets ;  
Where commerce lavish'd unexhausted plenty,  
And jollity maintain'd eternal revels.—

*Dem.* How chang'd, alas !—Now ghastly desolation  
In triumph sits upon our shatter'd spires,  
Now, superstition, ignorance and error,  
Usurp our temples, and profane our altars.

*Leo.* From ev'ry palace burst a mingled clamour,  
The dreadful dissonance of barb'rous triumph,  
Shrieks of affright, and wailings of distress.  
Oft when the cries of violated beauty  
Arose to heaven, and pierc'd my bleeding breast,  
I felt thy pains, and trembled for Aspasia.

*Dem.* Aspasia ! spare that lov'd, that mournful name :  
Dear hapless maid—tempestuous grief o'erbears  
My reasoning powers—Dear, hapless, lost Aspasia !

*Leo.* Suspend the thought.

*Dem.* All thought on her is madness :  
Yet let me think—I see the helpless maid,  
Behold the monsters gaze with savage rapture,  
Behold how lust and rapine struggle round her.

*Leo.* Awake, Demetrius, from this dismal dream,  
Sink not beneath imaginary sorrows :  
Call to your aid your courage, and your wisdom ;

Think on the sudden change of human scenes ;  
Think on the various accidents of war ;  
Think on the mighty power of awful virtue ;  
Think on that Providence that guards the good.

*Dem.* O, Providence ! extend thy care to me,  
For courage droops, unequal to the combat,  
And weak philosophy denies her succours.  
Sure some kind sabre in the heat of battle,  
Ere yet the foe found leisure to be cruel,  
Dismissed her to the sky.

*Leo.* Some virgin martyr,  
Perhaps, enamour'd of resembling virtue,  
With gentle hand restrain'd the streams of life,  
And snatch'd her timely from her country's fate.

*Dem.* From those bright regions of eternal day,  
Where now thou shin'st among thy fellow-saints.  
Array'd in purer light, look down on me :  
In pleasing visions, and assuasive dreams,  
O ! sooth my soul, and teach me how to lose thee.

*Leo.* Enough of unavailing tears, Demetrius ;  
I came obedient to thy friendly summons,  
And hop'd to share thy counsels, not thy sorrows ;  
While thus we mourn the fortune of Aspasia,  
To what are we reserv'd ?

*Dem.* To what I know not :  
But hope, yet hope, to happiness and honour ;  
If happiness can be without Aspasia.

*Leo.* But whence this new-sprung hope ?

*Dem.* From Cali Bassa :

The chief, whose wisdom guides the Turkish counsels,  
He, tir'd of slavery, though the highest slave,  
Projects at once our freedom and his own ;  
And bids us thus disguis'd await him here.

*Leo.* Can he restore the state he could not save ?

In vain, when Turkey's troops assail'd our walls,  
His kind intelligence betray'd their measures ;  
Their arms prevail'd, though Cali was our friend.

*Dem.* When the tenth sun had set upon our sorrow  
At midnight's private hour a voice unknown  
Sounds in my sleeping ear, ' Awake, Demetrius,  
' Awake, and follow me to better fortunes ;'  
Surpriz'd I start, and bless the happy dream ;  
Then rousing know the fiery chief Abdallah,  
Whose quick impatience seiz'd my doubtful hand,  
And led me to the shore where Cali stood,  
Pensive and list'ning to the beating surge.  
There in soft hints and in ambiguous phrase,  
With all the diffidence of long experience,  
That oft had practis'd fraud, and oft detected,  
The vet'ran courtier half reveal'd his project.  
By his command, equipp'd for speedy flight,  
Deep in a winding creek a galley lies,  
Mann'd with the bravest of our fellow captives,  
Selected by my care, a hardy band,  
That long to hail thee chief.

*Leo.* But what avails  
So small a force ? or why should Cali fly ?  
Or how can Cali's flight restore our country ?

*Dem.* Reserve these questions for a safer hour,  
Or hear himself, for see the Bassa comes.

CALI BASSA enters.

*Cali.* Now summon all thy soul, illustrious Christian !  
Awake each faculty that sleeps within thee,  
The courtier's policy, the sage's firmness,  
The warrior's ardour, and the patriot's zeal ;  
If chasing past events with vain pursuit,



Or wand'ring in the wilds of future being,  
A single thought now rove, recall it home.  
But can thy friend sustain the glorious cause,  
The cause of liberty, the cause of nations?

*Dem.* Observe him closely with a statesman's eye,  
Thou that hast long perus'd the draughts of nature,  
And know'st the characters of vice and virtue,  
Left by the hand of Heaven on human clay.

*Cali.* His mien is lofty, his demeanour great,  
Nor sprightly folly wantons in his air,  
Nor dull serenity becalms his eyes.  
Such had I trusted once as soon as seen,  
But cautious age suspects the flatt'ring form,  
And only credits what experience tells.  
Has silence press'd her seal upon his lips?  
Does adamantinè faith invest his heart?  
Will he not bend beneath a tyrant's frown?  
Will he not melt before ambition's fire?  
Will he not soften in a friend's embrace?  
Or flow dissolving in a woman's tears?

*Dem.* Sooner these trembling leaves shall find a voice,  
And tell the secrets of their conscious walks;  
Sooner the breeze shall catch the flying sounds,  
And shock the tyrant with the tale of treason.  
Your slaughter'd multitudes that swell the shore,  
With monuments of death proclaim his courage;  
Virtue and liberty engross his soul,  
And leave no place for perfidy or fear.

*Leo.* I scorn a trust unwillingly repos'd;  
Demetrius will not lead me to dishonour;  
Consult in private, call me when your scheme  
Is ripe for action, and demands the sword.

*Dem.* Leontius, stay.

[Going.]

*Cali.* Forgive an old man's weakness,  
And share the deepest secrets of my soul,  
My wrongs, my fears, my motives, my designs.—  
When unsuccessful wars, and civil factions,  
Embroid'd the Turkish state—our Sultan's father,  
Great Amurath, at my request, forsook  
The cloister's ease, resum'd the tott'ring throne,  
And snatch'd the reins of abdicated power  
From giddy Mahomet's unskilful hand.  
This fir'd the youthful king's ambitious breast,  
He murmurs vengeance at the name of Cali,  
And dooms my rash fidelity to ruin.

*Dem.* Unhappy lot of all that shine in courts;—  
For forc'd compliance, or for zealous virtue,  
Still odious to the monarch, or the people.

*Cali.* Such are the woes when arbitrary power,  
And lawless passion, hold the sword of justice.  
If there be any land, as fame reports,  
Where common laws restrain the prince and subject,  
A happy land, where circulating power  
Flows through each member of th' embodied state,  
Sure, not unconscious of the mighty blessing,  
Her grateful sons shine bright with ev'ry virtue;  
Untainted with the lust of innovation,  
Sure all unite to hold her league of rule  
Unbroken as the sacred chain of nature,  
That links the jarring elements in peace.

*Leo.* But say, great Bassa, why the Sultan's anger,  
Burning in vain, delays the stroke of death?

*Cali.* Young, and unsettled in his father's kingdoms,  
Fierce as he was, he dreaded to destroy  
The empire's darling, and the soldier's boast;  
But now confirm'd, and swelling with his conquests,

Secure he tramples my declining fame,  
Frowns unrestrain'd, and dooms me with his eyes.

*Dem.* What can reverse thy doom?

*Cali.* The tyrant's death.

*Dem.* But Greece is still forgot.

*Cali.* On Asia's coast,  
Which lately bless'd my gentle government,  
Soon as the Sultan's unexpected fate  
Fills all th' astonish'd empire with confusion,  
My policy shall raise an easy throne;  
The Turkish powers from Europe shall retreat,  
And harrass Greece no more with wasteful war.  
A galley mann'd with Greeks, thy charge, Leontius,  
Attends to waft us to repose and safety.

*Dem.* That vessel, if observ'd, alarms the court,  
And gives a thousand fatal questions birth;—  
Why stor'd for flight? and why prepar'd by Cali?

*Cali.* This hour I'll beg, with unsuspecting face,  
Leave to perform my pilgrimage to Mecca;  
Which, granted, hides my purpose from the world,  
And, though refus'd, conceals it from the Sultan.

*Leo.* How can a single hand attempt a life  
Which armies guard, and citadels inclose?

*Cali.* Forgetful of command, with captive beauties,  
Far from his troops, he toys his hours away.  
A roving soldier seiz'd in Sophia's temple  
A virgin shining with distinguish'd charms,  
And brought his beauteous plunder to the Sultan.

*Dem.* In Sophia's temple!—What alarm!—Proceed.

*Cali.* The Sultan gaz'd, he wonder'd, and he lov'd;  
In passion lost, he bad the conqu'ring fair  
Renounce her faith, and be the queen of Turkey;  
The pious maid, with modest indignation,  
Threw back the glitt'ring bribe.



*Dem.* Celestial Goodness!

It must, it must be She; her name?

*Cali.* Aspasia.

*Dem.* What hopes, what terrors rush upon my soul!  
O, lead me quickly to the scene of fate;  
Break through the politicians tedious forms,  
Aspasia calls me, let me fly to save her.

*Leo.* Did Mahomet reproach or praise her virtue?

*Cali.* His offers oft repeated, still refus'd,  
At length rekindled his accustom'd fury,  
And chang'd th' endearing smile and am'rous whisper  
To threats of torture, death, and violation.

*Dem.* These tedious narratives of frozen age  
Distract my soul: dispatch thy ling'ring tale;  
Say, did a voice from heaven restrain the tyrant?  
Did interposing angels guard her from him?

*Cali.* Just in the moment of impending fate,  
Another plund'rer brought the bright Irene;  
Of equal beauty, but of softer mien,  
Fear in her eye, submission on her tongue,  
Her mournful charms attracted his regards,  
Disarm'd his rage, and in repeated visits  
Gain'd all his heart; at length his eager love  
To her transferr'd the offer of a crown.

*Leo.* Nor found again the bright temptation fail?

*Cali.* Trembling to grant, nor daring to refuse,  
While Heaven and Mahomet divide her fears,  
With coy caresses and with pleasing wiles  
She feeds his hopes, and soothes him to delay.  
For her, repose is banish'd from the night,  
And bus'ness from the day. In her apartments  
He lives——

*Leo.* And there must fall.

But yet th' attempt  
Is hazardous.

*Leo.* Forbear to speak of hazards,  
What has the wretch that has surviv'd his country,  
His friends, his liberty, to hazard?

*Cali.* Life.

*Dem.* Th' inestimable privilege of breathing!  
Important hazard! What's that airy bubble  
When weigh'd with Greece, with virtue, with Aspasia?  
A floating atom, dust that falls unheeded  
Into the adverse scale, nor shakes the balance.

*Cali.* At least this day be calm——If we succeed,  
Aspasia's thine, and all thy life is rapture——  
See! Mustapha, the tyrant's minion, comes;  
Invest Leontius with his new command;  
And wait Abdalla's unsuspected visits:  
Remember freedom, glory, Greece, and love.

[*Exeunt Demetrius and Leontius.*]

*MUSTAPHA enters.*

*Mus.* By what enchantment does this lovely Greek  
Hold in her chains the captivated sultan?  
He tires his fav'rites with Irene's praise,  
And seeks the shades to muse upon Irene;  
Irene steals unheeded from his tongue,  
And mingles unperceiv'd with ev'ry thought.

*Cali.* Why should the sultan shun the joys of beauty,  
Or arm his breast against the force of love?  
Love, that with sweet vicissitude relieves  
The warrior's labours, and the monarch's cares.  
But will she yet receive the faith of Mecca?

*Mus.* Those powerful tyrants of the female breast,  
Fear and ambition, urge her to compliance;

Dress'd in each charm of gay magnificence,  
Alluring grandeur courts her to his arms,  
Religion calls her from the wish'd embrace,  
Paints future joys, and points to distant glories.

*Cali.* Soon will the unequal contest be decided.  
Prospects obscur'd by distance faintly strike ;  
Each pleasure brightens, at its near approach,  
And ev'ry danger shocks with double horror.

*Mus.* How shall I scorn the beautiful apostate !  
How will the bright Aspasia shine above her !

*Cali.* Should she, for proselytes are always zealous,  
With pious warmth receive our prophet's law——

*Mus.* Heaven will condemn the mercenary fervour,  
Which love of greatness, not of truth inflames.

*Cali.* Cease, cease thy censures : for the sultan comes  
Alone, with am'rous haste to seek his love.

MAHOMET enters.

*Cali.* Hail, Terror of the Monarchs of the World !  
Unshaken be thy throne as earth's firm base ;  
Live till the sun forgets to dart his beams,  
And weary planets loiter in their courses !

*Mab.* But, Cali, let Irene share thy prayers ;  
For what is length of days without Irene ?  
I come from empty noise, and tasteless pomp,  
From crowds that hide a monarch from himself,  
To prove the sweets of privacy and friendship,  
And dwell upon the beauties of Irene.

*Cali.* O, may her beauties last unchang'd by time,  
As those that bless the mansions of the good.

*Mab.* Each realm where beauty turns the graceful shape,  
Swells the fair breast, or animates the glance,  
Adorns my palace with its brightest virgins ;



Yet unacquainted with these soft emotions  
 I walk'd superior, through the blaze of charms,  
 Prais'd without rapture, left without regret.  
 Why rove I now, when absent from my fair,  
 From solitude to crouds, from crouds to solitude,  
 Still restless, till I clasp the lovely maid,  
 And ease my loaded soul upon her bosom?

*Mus.* Forgive, great sultan, that intrusive duty  
 Enquires the final doom of Menodorus,  
 The Grecian counsellor.

*Mab.* Go see him die;  
 His martial rhet'ric taught the Greeks resistance;  
 Had they prevail'd, I ne'er had known Irene.

[*Exit Mustapha.*]

*Mab.* Remote from tumult, in the adjoining palace,  
 Thy care shall guard this treasure of my soul;  
 There let Aspasia, since my fair entreats it,  
 With converse chase the melancholy moments  
 Sure, chill'd with sixty winter camps, thy blood  
 At sight of female charms will glow no more.

*Cali.* These years, unconquer'd Mahomet, demand  
 Desires more pure, and other cares than love.  
 Long have I wish'd, before our prophet's tomb,  
 To pour my prayers for thy successful reign,  
 To quit the tumults of the noisy camp.  
 And sink into the silent grave in peace.

*Mab.* What! think of peace while haughty Scanderbeg,  
 Elate with conquest, in his native mountains,  
 Prowls o'er the wealthy spoils of bleeding Turkey?  
 While fair Hungaria's unexhausted vallies  
 Pour forth their legions, and the roaring Danube  
 Rolls half his floods unheard through shouting camps?  
 Nor couldst thou more support a life of sloth  
 Than Amurath —

*Cali.* Still full of Amurath!

[*Aside.*

*Mab.* Than Amurath, accustom'd to command,  
Could bear his son upon the Turkish throne.

*Cali.* This pilgrimage our lawgiver ordain'd—

*Mab.* For those who could not please by nobler service.—  
Our warlike prophet loves an active faith,  
The only flame of enterprizing virtue,  
Mocks the dull vows of solitude and penance,  
And scorns the lazy hermit's cheap devotion;  
Shine thou distinguish'd by superior merit,  
With wonted zeal pursue the task of war,  
Till every nation reverence the Koran,  
And every suppliant lift his eyes to Mecca.

*Cali.* This regal confidence, this pious ardour,  
Let prudence moderate, though not suppress.  
Is not each realm that smiles with kinder suns,  
Or boasts a happier soil, already thine?  
Extended empire, like expanded gold,  
Exchanges solid strength for feeble splendor.

*Mab.* Preach thy dull politics to vulgar kings,  
Thou know'st not yet thy master's future greatness,  
His vast designs, his plans of boundless power.  
When ev'ry storm in my domain shall roar,  
When ev'ry wave shall beat a Turkish shore,  
Then, Cali, shall the toils of battle cease,  
Then dream of prayer, and pilgrimage, and peace.

[*Exeunt.*

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ACT II. SCENE I.

ASPASIA and IRENE enter.

*Irene.*

ASPASIA, yet pursue the sacred theme ;  
Exhaust the stores of pious eloquence,  
And teach me to repel the sultan's passion.  
Still at Aspasia's voice a sudden rapture  
Exalts my soul, and fortifies my heart.  
The glitt'ring vanities of empty greatness,  
The hopes and fears, the joys and pains of life,  
Dissolve in air, and vanish into nothing.

*Aspa.* Let nobler hopes and juster fears succeed,  
And bar the passes of Irene's mind  
Against returning guilt.

*Irene.* When thou art absent,  
Death rises to my view, with all his terrors ;  
Then visions, horrid as a murd'rer's dreams,  
Chill my resolves, and blast my blooming virtue :  
Stern torture shakes his bloody scourge before me,  
And anguish gnashes on the fatal wheel.

*Asp.* Since fear predominates in every thought,  
And sways thy breast with absolute dominion,  
Think on th' insulting scorn, the conscious pangs,  
The future miseries that wait th' apostate ;  
So shall timidity assist thy reason,  
And wisdom into virtue turn thy frailty.

*Irene.* Will not that power that form'd the heart of woman,  
And wove the feeble texture of her nerves,  
Forgive those fears that shake the tender frame ?

*Asp.* The weakness we lament, ourselves create ;  
Instructed from our infant years to court



With counterfeited fears the aid of man,  
We learn to shudder at the rustling breeze,  
Start at the light, and tremble in the dark;  
Till affectation, rip'ning to belief,  
And folly, frightened at her own chimeras,  
Habitual cowardice usurps the soul.

*Irene.* Not all like thee can brave the shocks of fate,  
Thy soul by nature great, enlarg'd by knowledge,  
Soars unencumber'd with our idle cares,  
And all Aspasia, but her beauty's man.

*Asp.* Each gen'rous sentiment is thine, Demetrius,  
Whose soul, perhaps, yet mindful of Aspasia,  
Now hovers o'er this melancholy shade,  
Well pleas'd to find thy precepts not forgotten.  
O! could the grave restore the pious hero,  
Soon would his art or valour set us free,  
And bear us far from servitude and crimes.

*Irene.* He yet may live.

*Asp.* Alas! delusive dream!  
Too well I know him, his immod'rate courage,  
Th' impetuous sallies of excessive virtue,  
Too strong for love, have hurried him on death.

CALI and ABDALLA enter.

*Cali.* [*To Abd. as they advance.*] Behold our future sul-  
taness, Abdalla;—

Let artful flatt'ry now, to lull suspicion,  
Glide through Irene to the sultan's ear.  
Would'st thou subdue th' obdurate cannibal  
To tender friendship, praise him to his mistress.  
Well may those eyes that view these heav'nly charms

[*To Irene.*

Reject the daughters of contending kings;

For what are pompous titles, proud alliance,  
 Empire or wealth, to excellence like thine?

*Abd.* Receive th' impatient sultan to thy arms;  
 And may a long posterity of monarchs,  
 The pride and terror of succeeding days,  
 Rise from the happy bed; and future queens  
 Diffuse Irene's beauty through the world.

*Irene.* Can Mahomet's imperial hand descend  
 To clasp a slave; or, ~~can~~ a soul like mine,  
 Unus'd to power, and form'd for humbler scenes,  
 Support the splendid miseries of Greatness?

*Cali.* No regal pageant deck'd with casual honours,  
 Scorn'd by his subjects, trampled by his foes;  
 No feeble tyrant of a petty state  
 Courts thee to shake on a dependent throne;  
 Born to command, as thou to charm mankind,  
 The sultan from himself derives his greatness.  
 Observe, bright maid, as his resistless voice  
 Drives on the tempest of destructive war,  
 How nation after nation falls before him.

*Abd.* At his dread name the distant mountains shake  
 Their cloudy summits, and the sons of fierceness,  
 That range unciviliz'd from rock to rock,  
 Distrust th' eternal fortresses of nature,  
 And wish their gloomy caverns more obscure.

*Asp.* Forbear this lavish pomp of dreadful praise;  
 The horrid images of war and slaughter  
 Renew our sorrows, and awake our fears.

*Abd.* Cali, methinks yon waving trees afford  
 A doubtful glimpse of our approaching friends;  
 Just as I mark'd them, they forsook the shore,  
 And turn'd their hasty steps towards the garden.

*Cali.* Conduct these queens, Abdalla, to the palace:

Such heavenly beauty form'd for adoration,  
The pride of monarchs, the reward of conquest;—  
Such beauty must not shine to vulgar eyes.

[*Exit Abdalla, Aspasia, and Irene.*]

How Heaven, in scorn of human arrogance,  
Commits to trivial chance the fate of nations!  
While with incessant thought laborious man  
Extends his mighty schemes of wealth and power,  
And tow'rs and triumphs in ideal greatness,  
Some accidental gust of opposition  
Blasts all the beauties of his new creation,  
O'erturns the fabric of presumptuous reason,  
And whelms the swelling architect beneath it.  
Had not the breeze untwin'd the meeting boughs,  
And through the parted shade disclos'd the Greeks,  
Th' important hour had pass'd unheeded by,  
In all the sweet oblivion of delight,  
In all the fopperies of meeting lovers;  
In sighs and tears, in transports and embraces,  
In soft complaints, and idle protestations.

DEMETRIUS and LEONTIUS enter.

Could omens fright the resolute and wise,  
Well might we fear impending disappointments.

*Leo.* Your artful suit, your monarch's fierce denial,  
The cruel doom of hapless Menodorus.—

*Dem.* And your new charge, that dear that heavenly maid.

*Leo.* All this we know already from Abdalla.

*Dem.* Such slight defeats but animate the brave  
To stronger efforts, and maturer counsels.

*Cali.* My doom confirm'd establishes my purpose:  
Calmly he heard, till Amurath's resumption  
Rose to his thought, and set his soul on fire:



When from his lips the fatal name burst out,  
A sudden pause th' imperfect sense suspended,  
Like the dread stillness of condensing storms.

*Dem.* The loudest cries of nature urge us forward ;  
Despotic rage pursues the life of Cali ;  
His groaning country claims Leontius' aid ;  
And yet another voice, forgive me, Greece,  
The pow'rful voice of love enflames Demetrius,  
Each ling'ring hour alarms me for Asia.

*Cali.* What passions reign among thy crew, Leontius ?  
Does cheerless diffidence oppress their hearts ?  
Or sprightly hope exalt their kindling spirits ?  
Do they with pain repress the struggling shout,  
And listen eager to the rising wind ?

*Leo.* All there is hope, and gaiety, and courage ;  
No cloudy doubts, or languishing delays :  
Ere I could range them on the crowded deck,  
At once a hundred voices thunder'd round me,  
And every voice was liberty and Greece.

*Dem.* Swift let us rush upon the careless tyrant,  
Nor give him leisure for another crime.

*Leo.* Then let us now resolve, nor idly waste  
Another hour in dull deliberation.

*Cali.* But see, where destin'd to protract our counsels,  
Comes Mustapha. Your Turkish robes conceal you—  
Retire with speed, while I prepare to meet him  
With artificial smiles, and seeming friendship.

[*Exit Demetrius and Leontius.*]

MUSTAPHA enters.

I see the gloom that low'rs upon thy brow,  
These days of love and pleasure charm not thee ;  
Too slow these gentle constellations roll,

Thou long'st for stars that frown on human kind,  
And scatter discord from their baleful beams.

*Mus.* How blest art thou, still jocund and serene,  
Beneath the load of business, and of years.

*Cali.* Sure by some wondrous sympathy of souls,  
My heart still beats responsive to the sultan's;  
I share, by secret instinct, all his joys,  
And feel no sorrow while my sov'reign smiles.

*Mus.* The sultan comes, impatient for his love;  
Conduct her hither, let no rude intrusion  
Molest these private walks, or care invade  
These hours assign'd to pleasure and Irene. [Exit Cali.

MAHOMET enters.

*Mab.* Now, Mustapha, pursue thy tale of horror.  
Has treason's dire infection reach'd my palace?  
Can Cali dare the stroke of heavenly justice,  
In the dark precincts of the gaping grave,  
And load with perjuries his parting soul?  
Was it for this, that sick'ning in Epirus,  
My father call'd me to his couch of death,  
Join'd Cali's hand to mine, and falt'ring cry'd,  
'Restrain the fervour of impetuous youth  
'With venerable Cali's faithful counsels!'  
Are these the counsels? This the faith of Cali?  
Were all our favours lavish'd on a villain?  
Confest?—

*Mus.* Confest by dying Menodorous.  
In his last agonies the gasping coward,  
Amidst the tortures of the burning steel,  
Still fond of life, groan'd out the dreadful secret,  
Held forth this fatal scroll, then sunk to nothing.

*Mab.* [*Examining the Paper.*] His correspondence with  
our foes of Greece!

His hand! his seal! The secrets of my soul  
Conceal'd from all but him! All! all conspire  
To banish doubt, and brand him for a villain.  
Our schemes for ever cross'd, our mines discover'd,  
Betray'd some traitor lurking near my bosom.  
Oft have I rag'd, when their wide-wasting cannon  
Lay pointed at our batt'ries, yet unform'd  
And broke the meditated lines of war.  
Detested Cali too, with artful wonder,  
Would shake his wily head, and closely whisper,  
'Beware of Mustapha, beware of treason.'

*Mus.* The faith of Mustapha disdains suspicion;  
But yet, great Emperor, beware of treason.  
Th' insidious Bassa, fir'd by disappointment——

*Mab.* Shall feel the vengeance of an injur'd king.  
Go, seize him, load him with reproachful chains;  
Before the assembled troops proclaim his crimes;  
Then leave him stretch'd upon the ling'ring rack,  
Amidst the camp to howl his life away.

*Mus.* Should we before the troops proclaim his crimes,  
I dread his arts of seeming innocence,  
His bland address, and sorcery of tongue;  
And should he fall unheard, by sudden justice,  
Th' adoring soldiers would revenge their idol.

*Mab.* Cali, this day with hypocritic zeal,  
Implor'd my leave to visit Mecca's temple;  
Struck with the wonder of a statesman's goodness,  
I rais'd his thoughts to more sublime devotion.  
Now let him go, pursu'd by silent wrath,  
Meet unexpected daggers in his way,  
And in some distant land obscurely die.



*Mus.* There will his boundless wealth, the spoil of Asia,  
 Heap'd by your father's ill-plac'd bounties on him,  
 Disperse rebellion through the Eastern World ;  
 Bribe to his cause, and list beneath his banners  
 Arabia's roving troops, the sons of swiftness,  
 And arm the Persian Heretic against thee ;  
 There shall he waste thy frontiers, check thy conquests,  
 And, though at length subdu'd, elude thy vengeance.

*Mab.* Elude my vengeance ? no :—My troops shall range  
 Th' eternal snows that freeze beyond Mæotis,  
 And Afric's torrid sands in search of Cali.  
 Should the fierce North upon his frozen wings  
 Bear him aloft above the wond'ring clouds,  
 And seat him in the Pleiads' golden chariots,  
 Thence should my fury drag him down to tortures ;  
 Wherever guilt can fly, revenge can follow.

*Mus.* Wilt thou dismiss the savage from the toils,  
 Only to hunt him round the ravag'd world ?

*Mab.* Suspend his sentence—empire and Irene  
 Claim my divided soul. This wretch, unworthy  
 To mix with nobler cares, I'll throw aside  
 For idle hours, and crush him at my leisure.

*Mus.* Let not the unbounded greatness of his mind  
 Betray my king to negligence of danger.  
 Perhaps the clouds of dark conspiracy  
 Now roll full fraught with thunder o'er your head.  
 Twice since the morning rose I saw the Bassa,  
 Like a fell adder swelling in a brake,  
 Beneath the covert of this verdant arch,  
 In private conference ; beside him stood  
 Two men unknown, the partners of his bosom ;  
 I mark'd them well, and trac'd in either face  
 The gloomy resolution, horrid greatness,

And stern composure of despairing heroes.  
And to confirm my thought, at sight of me,  
As blasted by my presence, they withdrew  
With all the speed of terror and of guilt.

*Mab.* The strong emotions of my troubled soul  
Allow no pause for art or for contrivance;  
And dark perplexity distracts my counsels.  
Do thou resolve: for see Irene comes!  
At her approach each ruder gust of thought  
Sinks like the sighing of a tempest spent,  
And gales of softer passion fan my bosom.

[*Cali enters with Irene, and exit with Mustapha.*]

MAHOMET and IRENE.

*Mab.* Wilt thou descend, fair daughter of perfection,  
To hear my vows, and give mankind a queen?  
Ah! cease, Irene, cease those flowing sorrows,  
That melt an heart, impregnable till now,  
And turn thy thoughts henceforth to love and empire.  
How will the matchless beauties of Irene,  
Thus bright in tears, thus amiable in ruin,  
With all the graceful pride of greatness heighten'd,  
Amidst the blaze of jewels and of gold,  
Adorn a throne, and dignify dominion!

*Irene.* Why all this glare of splendid eloquence,  
To paint the pageantries of guilty state?  
Must I for these renounce the hope of heaven,  
Immortal crowns, and fulness of enjoyment?

*Mab.* Vain raptures all—for your inferior natures  
Form'd to delight, and happy by delighting,  
Heaven has reserv'd no future paradise,  
But bids you rove the paths of bliss secure,  
Of total death and careless of hereafter;

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While heaven's high minister, whose awful volume  
Records each act, each thought of sov'reign man,  
Surveys your plays with inattentive glance,  
And leaves the lovely trifle unregarded.

*Irene.* Why then has nature's vain munificence  
Profusely pour'd her bounties upon woman?  
Whence then those charms thy tongue has deign'd to flatter,  
That air resistless and enchanting blush,  
Unless the beauteous fabric was design'd  
A habitation for a fairer soul?

*Mab.* Too high, bright maid, thou rat'st exterior grace:  
Not always do the fairest flowers diffuse  
The richest odours, nor the speckled shells  
Conceal the gem; let female arrogance  
Observe the feather'd wand'ers of the sky;  
With purple varied and bedropp'd with gold,  
They prune the wing, and spread the glossy plumes,  
Ordain'd, like you, to flutter and to shine,  
And cheer the weary passenger with music.

*Irene.* Mean as we are, this tyrant of the world  
Implores our smiles, and trembles at our feet:  
Whence flow the hopes and fears, despair and rapture,  
Whence all the bliss and agonies of love?

*Mab.* Why, when the balm of sleep descends on man,  
Do gay delusions, wand'ring o'er the brain,  
Sooth the delighted soul with empty bliss?  
To want give affluence? and to slav'ry freedom?  
Such are love's joys, the lenitives of life,  
A fancied treasure, and a waking dream.

*Irene.* Then let me once, in honour of our sex,  
Assume the boastful arrogance of man.  
Th' attractive softness, and th' endearing smile,  
And powerful glance, 'tis granted, are her own;



Nor has impartial nature's frugal hand  
 Exhausted all her nobler gifts on you ;  
 Do not we share the comprehensive thought,  
 Th' enlivening wit, the penetrating reason ?  
 Beats not the female breast with gen'rous passions,  
 The thirst of empire and the love of glory ?

*Mab.* Illustrious maid, new wonders fix me thine ;  
 Thy soul completes the triumphs of thy face.  
 I thought (forgive, my fair) the noblest aim,  
 The strongest effort of a female soul,  
 Was but to choose the graces of the day ;  
 To tune the tongue, to teach the eyes to roll,  
 Dispose the colours of the flowing robe,  
 And add new roses to the faded cheek.  
 Will it not charm a mind like thine exalted,  
 To shine the goddess of applauding nations,  
 To scatter happiness and plenty round thee,  
 To bid the prostrate captive rise and live,  
 To see new cities tower at thy command,  
 And blasted kingdoms flourish at thy smile ?

*Irene.* Charm'd with the thought of blessing human kind,  
 Too calm I listen to the flatt'ring sounds.

*Mab.* O seize the power to bless—Irene's nod  
 Shall break the fetters of the groaning Christian :  
 Greece, in her lovely patroness secure,  
 Shall mourn no more her plunder'd palaces.

*Irene.* Forbear—O, do not urge me to my ruin !

*Mab.* To state and power I court thee, not to ruin :  
 Smile on my wishes, and command the globe.  
 Security shall spread her shield before thee,  
 And love enfold thee with his downy wings.  
 If greatness please thee, mount th' imperial seat ;  
 If pleasure charm thee, view this soft retreat ;

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Here ev'ry warbler of the sky shall sing ;  
 Here ev'ry fragrance breathe of ev'ry spring :  
 To deck these bowers each region shall combine,  
 And ev'n our prophet's gardens envy thine :  
 Empire and love shall share the blissful day,  
 And varied life steal unperceiv'd away. [*Exeunt.*]

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ACT III. SCENE I.

*CALI with a discontented air ; to him enters ABDALLA.*

*Cali.*

Is this the fierce conspirator Abdalla ?  
 Is this the restless diligence of treason ?  
 Where hast thou linger'd while th' encumber'd hours,  
 Fly lab'ring with the fate of future nations,  
 And hungry slaughter scents imperial blood ?

*Abd.* Important cares detain'd me from your counsels.

*Cali.* Some petty passion ! some domestic trifle !  
 Some vain amusement of a vacant soul !  
 A weeping wife perhaps, or dying friend,  
 Hung on your neck, and hinder'd your departure.  
 Is this a time for softness or for sorrow ?  
 Unprofitable, peaceful, female virtues !  
 When eager vengeance shows a naked foe,  
 And kind ambition points the way to greatness.

*Abd.* Must then ambition's votaries infringe  
 The laws of kindness, break the bonds of nature ?  
 And quit the names of brother, friend, and father ?

*Cali.* This sov'reign passion, scornful of restraint,  
 Ev'n from the birth affects supreme command,

Swells in the breast, and with resistless force  
O'erbears each gentler motion of the mind.  
As when a deluge overspreads the plains,  
The wand'ring rivulet, and silver lake,  
Mix, undistinguish'd, with the gen'ral roar.

*Abd.* Yet can ambition in Abdalla's breast  
Claim but the second place: there mighty love  
Has fix'd his hopes, inquietudes, and fears,  
His glowing wishes, and his jealous pangs.

*Cali.* Love is indeed the privilege of youth;  
Yet, on a day like this, when expectation  
Pants for the dread event—But let us reason——

*Abd.* Hast thou grown old amidst the crowd of courts,  
And turn'd the instructive page of human life,  
To cant at last of reason to a lover?  
Such ill-tim'd gravity, such serious folly,  
Might well befit the solitary student,  
Th' unpractis'd dervise, or sequester'd faquir.  
Know'st thou not yet, when love invades the soul,  
That all her faculties receive his chains?  
That reason gives her sceptre to his hand,  
Or only struggles to be more enslav'd?  
Aspasia, who can look upon thy beauties,  
Who hear thee speak, and not abandon reason?  
Reason! the hoary dotard's dull directress,  
That loses all because she hazard's nothing:  
Reason! the tim'rous pilot, that to shun  
The rocks of life, for ever flies the port.

*Cali.* But why this sudden warmth?

*Abd.* Because I love:

Because my slighted passion burns in vain!  
Why roars the lioness distress'd by hunger?  
Why foam the swelling waves when tempests rise?

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Why shakes the ground, when subterraneous fires  
Fierce through the bursting caverns rend their way?

*Cali.* Not till this day thou saw'st this fatal fair;  
Did ever passion make so swift a progress?  
Once more reflect, suppress this infant folly.

*Abd.* Gross fires, enkindled by a mortal hand,  
Spread by degrees, and dread th' oppressing stream;  
The subtler flames emitted from the sky,  
Flash out at once, with strength above resistance.

*Cali.* How did Aspasia welcome your address?  
Did you proclaim this unexpected conquest?  
Or pay with speaking eyes a lover's homage?

*Abd.* Confounded, aw'd, and lost in admiration,  
I gaz'd, I trembl'd; but I could not speak:  
When ev'n as love was breaking off from wonder,  
And tender accents quiver'd on my lips,  
She mark'd my sparkling eyes, and heaving breast,  
And, smiling, conscious of her charms, withdrew.

DEMETRIUS and LEONTIUS enter.

*Cali.* Now be some moments master of thyself,  
Nor let Demetrius know thee for a rival.  
Hence! or be calm—To disagree is ruin.

*Dem.* When will occasion smile upon our wishes,  
And give the tortures of suspense a period?  
Still must we linger in uncertain hope?  
Still languish in our chains and dream of freedom,  
Like thirsty sailors gazing on the clouds,  
Till burning death shoots through their wither'd limbs?

*Cali.* Deliverance is at hand; for Turkey's tyrant,  
Sunk in his pleasures, confident and gay,  
With all the hero's dull security,

Trusts to my care his mistress and his life,  
And laughs and wantons in the jaws of death.

*Leo.* So weak is man, when destin'd to destruction,  
The watchful slumber, and the crafty trust.

*Cali.* At my command yon iron gates unfold;  
At my command the sentinels retire;  
With all the licence of authority,  
Through bowing slaves, I range the private rooms,  
And of to-morrow's action fix the scene.

*Dem.* To-morrow's action! Can that hoary wisdom,  
Borne down with years, still dote upon to-morrow?  
That fatal mistress of the young, the lazy,  
The coward, and the fool, condemn'd to lose  
An useless life in waiting for to-morrow?  
To gaze with longing eyes upon to-morrow,  
Till interposing death destroys the prospect!  
Strange! that this gen'ral fraud from day to day,  
Should fill the world with wretches undetected,  
The soldier lab'ring through a winter's march,  
Still sees to-morrow drest in robes of triumph;  
Still to the lover's long-expecting arms,  
To-morrow brings the visionary bride.  
But thou, too old to bear another cheat,  
Learn, that the present hour alone is man's.

*Leo.* The present hour with open arms invites,  
Seize the kind fair, and press her to thy bosom.

*Dem.* Who knows, ere this important morrow rise,  
But fear of mutiny may taint the Greek?  
Who knows if Mahomet's awaking anger  
May spare the fatal bow-string till to-morrow?

*Abd.* Had our first Asian foes but known this ardour,  
We still had wander'd on Tartarian hills.  
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Lead us to danger, and abash their victors?  
This night with all her conscious stars be witness,  
Who merits most, Demetrius or Abdalla.

*Dem.* Who merits most!—I knew not we were rivals.

*Cali.* Young man, forbear—The heat of youth, no more—  
Well—'t is decreed—This night shall fix our fate.

Soon as the veil of evening clouds the sky,  
With cautious secrecy, Leontius, steer  
Th' appointed vessel to yon shaded bay,  
Form'd by this garden jutting on the deep;  
There, with your soldiers arm'd, and sails expanded,  
Await our coming, equally prepar'd  
For speedy flight, or obstinate defence. [Exit Leon.

*Dem.* Now pause, great Bassa, from the thoughts of blood,  
And kindly grant an ear to gentler sounds.  
If e'er thy youth has known the pangs of absence,  
Or felt th' impatience of obstructed love,  
Give me, before th' approaching hour of fate,  
Once to behold the charms of bright Aspasia,  
And draw new virtue from her heavenly tongue.

*Cali.* Let prudence, ere the suit be farther urg'd,  
Impartial weigh the pleasure with the danger.  
A little longer, and she's thine for ever.

*Dem.* Prudence and love conspire in this request,  
Lest, unacquainted with our bold attempt,  
Surprise o'erwhelm her, and retard our flight.

*Cali.* What I can grant, you cannot ask in vain—

*Dem.* I go to wait thy call; this kind consent  
Completes the gift of freedom and of life, [Exit.

*Abd.* And this is my reward—to burn, to languish,  
To rave unheeded, while the happy Greek,  
The refuse of our words, the dross of conquest,  
Throws his fond arms about Aspasia's neck,



Dwells on her lips, and sighs upon her breast;  
Is't not enough he lives by our indulgence,  
But he must live to make his masters wretched?

*Cali.* What claim hast thou to plead?

*Abd.* The claim of power,  
Th' unquestion'd claim of conquerors, and kings!

*Cali.* Yet in the use of power remember justice.

*Abd.* Can then th' assassin lift his treach'rous hand  
Against his king, and cry, remember justice?  
Justice demands the forfeit life of Cali;  
Justice demands that I reveal your crimes;  
Justice demands—But see th' approaching sultan.  
Oppose my wishes, and—remember justice.

*Cali.* Disorder sits upon thy face—retire. [*Exit Abdalla.*]

MAHOMET *enters.*

*Cali.* Long be the sultan bless'd with happy love!  
My zeal marks gladness dawning on thy cheek,  
With raptures such as fire the Pagan crowds,  
When pale, and anxious for their years to come,  
They see the sun surmount the dark eclipse,  
And hail unanimous their conqu'ring god.

*Mah.* My vows, 'tis true, she hears with less aversion,  
She sighs, she blushes, but she still denies.

*Cali.* With warmer courtship press the yielding fair,  
Call to your aid with boundless promises  
Each rebel wish, each traitor inclination  
That raises tumults in the female breast,  
The love of power, of pleasure, and of show.

*Mah.* These arts I try'd, and to inflame her more,  
By hateful business hurried from her sight,  
I bade a hundred virgins wait around her,  
Sooth her with all the pleasures of command,  
Applaud her charms, and court her to be great.

[*Exit.*]

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*Cali.* [Solus.] He's gone—Here rest, my soul, thy faint-  
ing wing,

Here recollect thy dissipated powers.—  
Our distant interests, and our different passions  
Now haste to mingle in one common centre,  
And fate lies crowded in a narrow space.  
Yet in that narrow space what dangers rise!—  
Far more I dread Abdalla's fiery folly,  
'Than all the wisdom of the grave Divan.  
Reason with reason fights on equal terms,  
The raging madman's unconnected schemes  
We cannot obviate, for we cannot guess.  
Deep in my breast he treasur'd this resolve,  
When Cali mounts the throne, Abdalla dies,  
Too fierce, too faithless for neglect of trust.

*IRENE and ASPASIA enter, with Attendants.*

*Cali.* Amidst the splendor of encircling beauty,  
Superior majesty proclaims thee queen,  
And nature justifies our monarch's choice.

*Irene.* Reserve this homage for some other fair,  
Urge me not on to glitt'ring guilt, nor pour  
In my weak ear th' intoxicating sounds.

*Cali.* Make haste, bright maid, to rule the willing world;  
Aw'd by the rigour of the sultan's justice,  
We court thy gentleness.

*Asp.* Can Cali's voice  
Concur to press a hapless captive's ruin?

*Cali.* Long would my zeal for Mahomet and thee  
Detain me here. But nations call upon me,  
And duty bids me choose a distant walk,  
Nor taint with care the privacies of love.

[Exit.

*Asp.* If yet this shining pomp, these sudden honours,  
Swell not thy soul beyond advice or friendship,  
Not yet inspire the follies of a queen,  
Or tune thine ear to soothing adulation,  
Suspend awhile the privilege of power,  
To hear the voice of truth ; dismiss thy train,  
Shake off th' incumbrances of state a moment,  
And lay the tow'ring sultaness aside,

[*Irene makes signs to her Attendants to retire.*]

While I foretel thy fate ; that office done——  
No more I boast th' ambitious name of friend,  
But sink among thy slaves without a murmur.

*Irene.* Did regal diadems invest my brow,  
Yet shou'd my soul, still faithful to her choice,  
Esteem Aspasia's breast the noblest kingdom.

*Asp.* The soul once tainted with so foul a crime,  
No more shall glow with friendship's hallow'd ardour :  
Those holy beings, whose superior care  
Guides erring mortals to the paths of virtue,  
Affrighted at impiety like thine,  
Resign their charge to baseness and to ruin.

*Irene.* Upbraid me not with fancy'd wickedness,  
I am not yet a queen, or an apostate.  
But should I sin beyond the hope of mercy,  
If, when religion prompts me to refuse,  
The dread of instant death restrains my tongue?

*Asp.* Reflect that life and death, affecting sounds,  
Are only varied modes of endless being ;  
Reflect that life, like ev'ry other blessing,  
Derives its value from its use alone ;  
Not for itself but for a nobler end  
Th' Eternal gave it, and that end is virtue.  
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Reason commands to cast the less away ;  
Thus life, with loss of wealth, is well preserv'd,  
And virtue cheaply sav'd, with loss of life.

*Irene.* If built on settled thought, this constancy  
Not idly flutters on a boastful tongue,  
Why, when destruction rag'd around our walls,  
Why fled this haughty heroine from the battle ?  
Why then did not this warlike Amazon  
Mix in the war, and shine among the heroes ?

*Asp.* Heaven, when its hand pour'd softness on our  
limbs,  
Unfit for toil, and polish'd into weakness,  
Made passive fortitude the praise of woman :  
Our only arms are innocence and meekness.  
Not then with raving cries I fill'd the city,  
But while Demetrius, dear lamented name !  
Pour'd storms of fire upon our fierce invaders,  
Implor'd th' eternal power to shield my country,  
With silent sorrows, and with calm devotion.

*Irene.* O ! did Irene shine the queen of Turkey,  
No more should Greece lament those prayers rejected.  
Again should golden splendour grace her cities,  
Again her prostrate palaces should rise,  
Again her temples sound with holy music :  
No more should danger fright, or want distress  
The smiling widows, and protected orphans.

*Asp.* By virtuous ends pursu'd by virtuous means,  
Nor think th' intention sanctifies the deed :  
That maxim publish'd in an impious age,  
Would loose the wild enthusiast to destroy,  
And fix the fierce usurper's bloody title.  
Then bigotry might send her slaves to war,  
And bid success become the test of truth ;

Unpitying massacre might waste the world,  
And persecution boast the call of Heaven.

*Irene.* Shall I not wish to cheer afflicted kings,  
And plan the happiness of mourning millions?

*Asp.* Dream not of pow'r thou never canst attain;  
When social laws first harmoniz'd the world,  
Superior man possess'd the charge of rule,  
The scale of justice, and the sword of power,  
Nor left us aught but flattery and state.

*Irene.* To me my lover's fondness will restore,  
Whate'er man's pride has ravish'd from our sex.

*Asp.* When soft security shall prompt the sultan,  
Freed from the tumults of unsettled conquest,  
To fix his court, and regulate his pleasures,  
Soon shall the dire seraglio's horrid gates  
Close like th' eternal bars of death upon thee,  
Immur'd, and buried in perpetual sloth,  
That gloomy slumber of the stagnant soul;  
There shalt thou view from far the quiet cottage,  
And sigh for cheerful poverty in vain:  
There wear the tedious hours of life away,  
Beneath each curse of unrelenting Heaven,  
Despair, and slav'ry, solitude, and guilt.

*Irene.* There shall we find the yet untasted bliss  
Of grandeur and tranquillity combin'd.

*Asp.* Tranquillity and guilt, disjoin'd by Heaven,  
Still stretch in vain their longing arms afar;  
Nor dare to pass the insuperable bound.  
Ah! let me rather seek the convent's cell;  
There when my thoughts, at interval of prayer,  
Descend to range these mansions of misfortune,  
Oft shall I dwell on our disastrous friendship,  
And shed the pitying tear for lost Irene.

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*Irene.* Go, languish on in dull obscurity ;  
Thy dazzled soul, with all its boasted greatness,  
Shrinks at th' o'erpowering gleams of regal state,  
Stoops from the blaze like a degenerate eagle,  
And flies for shelter to the shades of life.

*Asp.* On me, should Providence, without a crime,  
The weighty charge of royalty confer ;  
Call me to civilize the Russian wilds,  
Or bid soft science polish Britain's heroes :  
Soon shouldst thou see how false thy weak reproach.  
My bosom feels, enkindled from the sky,  
The lambent flames of mild benevolence,  
Untouch'd by fierce ambition's raging fires.

*Irene.* Ambition is the stamp, impress'd by Heaven  
To mark the noblest minds ; with active heat  
Inform'd they mount the precipice of power,  
Grasp at command, and tower in quest of empire ;  
While vulgar souls compassionate their cares,  
Gaze at their height, and tremble at their danger :  
Thus meaner spirits with amazement mark  
The varying seasons, and revolving skies,  
And ask, what guilty power's rebellious hand  
Rolls with eternal toil the pond'rous orbs ;  
While some archangel, nearer to perfection,  
In easy state presides o'er all their motions,  
Directs the planets with a careless nod,  
Conducts the sun, and regulates the spheres.

*Asp.* Well may'st thou hide in labyrinths of sound  
The cause that shrinks from reason's powerful voice.  
Stoop from thy flight, trace back th' entangled thought,  
And set the glitt'ring fallacy to view.  
Not power I blame, but power obtain'd by crime,  
Angelic greatness is angelic virtue.



Amidst the glare of courts, the shout of armies,  
Will not th' apostate feel the pangs of guilt,  
And wish too late for innocence and peace?  
Curst as the tyrant of th' infernal realms,  
With gloomy state and agonizing pomp.

*Maid enters.*

*Maid.* A Turkish stranger, of majestic mien,  
Asks at the gate admission to Aspasia,  
Commission'd, as he says, by Cali Bassa.

*Irene.* Whoe'er thou art, or whatsoe'er thy message,

Thanks for this kind relief—With speed admit him. *[Aside.*

*Asp.* He comes, perhaps, to sep'rate us for ever;  
When I am gone remember, O! remember,  
That none are great or happy, but the virtuous. *[Exit Irene.*

*DEMETRIUS enters.*

*Dem.* 'Tis she—My hope, my happiness, my love!  
Aspasia! do I once again behold thee?  
Still, still the same—unclouded by misfortune!  
Let my blest eyes for ever gaze—

*Asp.* Demetrius!

*Dem.* Why does the blood forsake thy lovely cheek?  
Why shoots this chillness thro' thy shaking nerves?  
Why does thy soul retire into herself?  
Recline upon my breast thy sinking beauties:  
Revive—Revive to freedom and to love.

*Asp.* What well-known voice pronounc'd the grateful  
sounds,

Freedom and love? Alas! I'm all confusion,  
A sudden mist o'ercasts my darken'd soul,

*Act III.*

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The present, past, and future swim before me,  
Lost in a wild perplexity of joy.

*Dem.* Such ecstasy of love! such pure affection,  
What worth can merit? or what faith reward?

*Asp.* A thousand thoughts, imperfect and distracted,  
Demand a voice, and struggle into birth;  
A thousand questions press upon my tongue,  
But all give way to rapture and Demetrius.

*Dem.* O, say, bright being, in this age of absence,  
What fears, what griefs, what dangers hast thou known?  
Say, how the tyrant threaten'd, flatter'd, sigh'd!  
Say, how he threaten'd, flatter'd, sigh'd in vain!  
Say, how the hand of violence was rais'd!  
Say, how thou call'dst in tears upon Demetrius!

*Asp.* Inform me rather, how thy happy courage  
Stemm'd in the breach the deluge of destruction,  
And pass'd uninjur'd through the walks of death?  
Did savage anger, and licentious conquest,  
Behold the hero with Aspasia's eyes?  
And thus protected in the gen'ral ruin,  
O, say, what guardian power convey'd thee hither.

*Dem.* Such strange events, such unexpected chances,  
Beyond my warmest hope, or wildest wishes,  
Concurr'd to give me to Aspasia's arms;  
I stand amaz'd, and ask, if yet I clasp thee.

*Asp.* Sure Heaven (for wonders are not wrought in vain)  
That joins us thus, will never part us more.

ABDALLA enters.

*Abd.* It parts you now—The hasty sultan sign'd  
The laws unread, and flies to his Irene.

*Dem.* Fix'd and intent on his Irene's charms,  
He envies none the converse of Aspasia.

*Abd.* Aspasia's absence will inflame suspicion;  
She cannot, must not, shall not linger here,  
Prudence and friendship bid me force her from you.

*Dem.* Force her! profane her with a touch and die.

*Abd.* 'Tis Greece, 'tis freedom calls Aspasia hence,  
Your careless love betrays your country's cause.

*Dem.* If we must part——

*Asp.* No! let us die together.

*Dem.* If we must part——

*Abd.* Dispatch; th' encreasing danger  
Will not admit a lover's long farewell,  
The long-drawn intercourse of sighs and kisses.

*Dem.* Then—O, my fair! I cannot bid thee go;  
Receive her, and protect her, gracious Heaven!  
Yet let me watch her dear departing steps,  
If fate pursues me, let it find me here.  
Reproach not, Greece, a lover's fond delays,  
Nor think thy cause neglected while I gaze:  
New force, new courage, from each glance I gain,  
And find our passions not infus'd in vain. [Exeunt.

#### ACT IV. SCENE I.

DEMETRIUS and ASPASIA enter as talking.

*Aspasia.*

ENOUGH—resistless reason calms my soul——  
Approving justice smiles upon your cause,  
And nature's rights entreat th' asserting sword.  
Yet when your hand is lifted to destroy,  
Think—but excuse a woman's needless caution,



Purge well thy mind from ev'ry private passion,  
Drive int'rest, love, and vengeance from thy thoughts,  
Fill all thy ardent breast with Greece and virtue ;  
Then strike secure—and Heaven assist the blow !

*Dem.* Thou kind assistant of my better angel,  
Propitious guide of my bewilder'd soul,  
Calm of my cares, and guardian of my virtue !

*Asp.* My soul, first kindl'd by thy bright example  
To noble thought and gen'rous emulation,  
Now but reflects those beams that flow'd from thee.

*Dem.* With native lusture, and unborrow'd greatness,  
Thou shin'st, bright maid, superior to distress ;  
Unlike the trifling race of vulgar beauties,  
Those glitt'ring dew-drops of a vernal morn,  
That spread their colours to the genial beam,  
And, sparkling, quiver to the breath of May ;  
But when the tempest with sonorous wing  
Sweeps o'er the grove, forsakes the lab'ring bough,  
Dispers'd in air, or mingled with the dust.

*Asp.* Forbear this triumph—still new conflicts wait us,  
Foes unforeseen, and dangers unsuspected.  
Oft when the fierce besiegers' eager host  
Beholds the fainting garrison retire,  
And rushes joyful to the naked wall,  
Destruction flashes from the insidious mine,  
And sweeps th' exulting conqueror away :  
Perhaps in vain the sultan's anger spar'd me,  
To find a meaner fate from treach'rous friendship—  
Abdalla——

*Dem.* Can Abdalla then dissemble ?  
That fiery chief, renown'd for gen'rous freedom,  
For zeal unguarded, undissembled hate,  
For daring truth, and turbulence of honour ?

*Asp.* This open friend, this undesigning hero,  
With noisy falsehoods forc'd me from your arms,  
To shock my virtue with a tale of love.

*Dem.* Did not the cause of Greece restrain my sword,  
Aspasia should not fear a second insult.

*Asp.* His pride and love by turns inspir'd his tongue,  
And intermix'd my praises with his own ;  
His wealth, his rank, his honours he recounted,  
Till, in the midst of arrogance and fondness,  
Th' approaching sultan forc'd me from the palace ;  
Then, while he gaz'd upon his yielding mistress,  
I stole unheeded from their ravish'd eyes,  
And sought this happy grove in quest of thee.

*Dem.* Soon may the final stroke decide our fate,  
Lest baneful discord crush our infant scheme,  
And strangled freedom perish in the birth !

*Asp.* My bosom, harass'd with alternate passions,  
Now hopes, now fears——

*Dem.* Th' anxieties of love.

*Asp.* Think how the sov'reign arbiter of kingdoms  
Detests thy false associates' black designs,  
And frowns on perjury, revenge, and murder.  
Embark'd with treason on the seas of fate,  
When Heaven shall bid the swelling billows rage,  
And point vindictive lightnings at rebellion,  
Will not the patriot share the traitor's danger ?  
Oh, could thy hand, unaided, free thy country,  
Nor mingled guilt pollute the sacred cause !

*Dem.* Permitted oft, though not inspir'd by Heaven,  
Successful treasons punish impious kings.

*Asp.* Nor end my terrors with the sultan's death ;  
Far as futurity's untravell'd waste  
Lies open to conjecture's dubious ken,

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On ev'ry side, confusion, rage, and death,  
Perhaps the phantoms of a woman's fear,  
Beset the treach'rous way with fatal ambush;  
Each Turkish bosom burns for thy destruction;  
Ambitious Cali dreads the statesman's arts,  
And hot Abdalla hates the happy lover.

*Dem.* Capricious man! to good and ill inconstant,  
Too much to fear or trust, is equal weakness.  
Sometimes the wretch, unaw'd by Heaven or Hell,  
With mad devotion idolizes honour.  
The Bassa, reeking, with his master's murder,  
Perhaps may start at violated friendship.

*Asp.* How soon, alas! will int'rest, fear, or envy,  
O'erthrow such weak, such accidental virtue,  
Nor built on faith, nor fortify'd by conscience?

*Dem.* When desp'rate ills demand a speedy cure,  
Distrust is cowardice, and prudence folly.

*Asp.* Yet think a moment ere you court destruction,  
What hand, when death has snatch'd away Demetrius,  
Shall guard Aspasia from triumphant lust.

*Dem.* Dismiss these needless fears—a troop of Greeks  
Well known, long try'd, expect us on the shore.  
Borne on the surface of the smiling deep,  
Soon shalt thou scorn, in safety's arms repos'd,  
Abdalla's rage, and Cali's stratagems.

*Asp.* Still, still distrust sits heavy on my heart.  
Will e'er an happier hour revisit Greece?

*Dem.* Should Heaven, yet unappeas'd, refuse its aid,  
Disperse our hopes, and frustrate our designs,  
Yet shall the conscience of the great attempt  
Diffuse a brightness on our future days;  
Nor will his country's groans reproach Demetrius.  
But how canst thou support the woes of exile?



Canst thou forget hereditary splendours,  
To live obscure upon a foreign coast,  
Content with science, innocence, and love ?

*Asp.* Nor wealth, nor titles, make Aspasia's bliss,  
O'erwhelm'd and lost amidst the public ruins,  
Unmov'd I saw the glitt'ring trifles perish,  
And thought the petty dross beneath a sigh.  
Cheerful I follow to the rural cell,  
Love be my wealth, and my distinction virtue.

*Dem.* Submissive, and prepar'd for each event,  
Now let us wait the last award of Heaven,  
Secure of happiness from flight or conquest,  
Nor fear the fair and learn'd can want protection.  
The mighty Tuscan courts the banish'd arts  
To kind Italia's hospitable shades ;  
There shall soft leisure wing th' excursive soul,  
And peace propitious smile on fond desire ;  
There shall despotic eloquence resume  
Her ancient empire o'er the yielding heart ;  
There poetry shall tune her sacred voice,  
And wake from ignorance the western world.

*CALI enters.*

*Cali.* At length th' unwilling sun resigns the world  
To silence and to rest. The hours of darkness,  
Propitious hours to stratagem and death,  
Pursue the last remains of ling'ring light.

*Dem.* Count not these hours as parts of vulgar time ;  
Think them a sacred treasure lent by Heaven,  
Which, squander'd by neglect, or fear, or folly,  
No pray'r recalls, no diligence redeems.  
To-morrow's dawn shall see the Turkish king  
Stretch'd in the dust, or tow'ring on his throne ;

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To-morrow's dawn shall see the mighty Cali  
The sport of tyranny, or lord of nations.

*Cali.* Then waste no longer these important moments  
In soft endearments, and in gentle murmur;  
Nor lose in love the patriot and the hero.

*Dem.* 'Tis love combin'd with guilt alone, that melts  
The soften'd soul to cowardice and sloth;  
But virtuous passion prompts the great resolve,  
And fans the slumb'ring spark of heavenly fire.  
Retire, my fair; that Pow'r that smiles on goodness  
Guide all thy steps, calm ev'ry stormy thought,  
And still thy bosom with the voice of peace!

*Asp.* Soon may we meet again, secure and free,  
To feel no more the pangs of separation! [Exit.

*Dem.* This night alone is ours—Our mighty foe,  
No longer lost in am'rous solitude,  
Will now remount the slighted seat of empire,  
And show Irene to the shouting people:  
Aspasia left her sighing in his arms,  
And list'ning to the pleasing tale of power;  
With soften'd voice she dropp'd the faint refusal,  
Smiling consent she sat, and blushing love.

*Cali.* Now, tyrant, with satiety of beauty,  
Now feast thine eyes, thine eyes that ne'er hereafter  
Shall dart their am'rous glances at the fair,  
Or glare on Cali with malignant beams.

LEONTIUS and ABDALLA enter.

*Leo.* Our bark unseen has reach'd th' appointed bay,  
And where yon trees wave o'er the foaming surge  
Recline against the shore; our Grecian troop  
Extends its lines along the sandy beach,  
Elate with hope, and panting for a foe.

*Abd.* The fav'ring winds assist the great design,  
Sport in our sails, and murmur o'er the deep.

*Cali.* 'Tis well—A single blow completes our wishes:  
Return with speed, Leontius, to your charge;  
The Greeks, disorder'd by their leader's absence,  
May droop dismay'd, or kindle into madness.

*Leo.* Suspected still?—What villain's pois'nous tongue  
Dares join Leontius' name with fear or falsehood?  
Have I for this preserv'd my guiltless bosom,  
Pure as the thoughts of infant innocence?  
Have I for this defy'd the chiefs of Turkey,  
Intrepid in the flaming front of war?

*Cali.* Hast thou not search'd my soul's profoundest thoughts?  
Is not the fate of Greece and Cali thine?

*Leo.* Why has thy choice then pointed out Leontius,  
Unfit to share this night's illustrious toils?  
To wait remote from action, and from honour,  
An idle list'ner to the distant cries  
Of slaughter'd infidels, and clash of swords?  
Tell me the cause, that while thy name, Demetrius,  
Shall soar triumphant on the wings of glory,  
Despis'd and curs'd, Leontius must descend,  
Through hissing ages, a proverbial coward,  
The tale of women, and the scorn of fools?

*Dem.* Can brave Leontius be the slave of glory?  
Glory, the casual gift of thoughtless crowds!  
Glory, the bribe of avaricious virtue!  
Be but my country free, be thine the praise;  
I ask no witness, but attesting conscience,  
No records, but the records of the sky.

*Leo.* Wilt thou then head the troop upon the shore,  
While I destroy the oppressor of mankind?

*Dem.* What canst thou boast superior to Demetrius?

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Ask to whose sword the Greeks will trust their cause,  
My name shall echo through the shouting field ;  
Demand whose force yon Turkish heroes dread,  
The shudd'ring camp shall murmur out Demetrius.

*Cali.* Must Greece, still wretched by her children's folly,  
For ever mourn their avarice or factions ?

Demetrius justly pleads a double title,  
The lover's int'rest aids the patriot's claim.

*Leo.* My pride shall ne'er protract my country's woes ;  
Succeed, my friend, unenvied by Leontius.

*Dem.* I feel new spirit shoot along my nerves,  
My soul expands to meet approaching freedom.  
Now hover o'er us with propitious wings,  
Ye sacred shades of patriots and of martyrs !  
All ye, whose blood tyrannic rage effus'd,  
Or prosecution drank, attend our call ;  
And from the mansions of perpetual peace  
Descend to sweeten labours once your own !

*Cali.* Go then, and with united eloquence  
Confirm your troops ; and when the moon's fair beam  
Plays on the quiv'ring waves, to guide our flight,  
Return, Demetrius, and be free for ever.

[*Exeunt Dem. and Leon.*]

*ABDALLA enters.*

*Abd.* How the new monarch, swell'd with airy rule,  
Looks down, contemptuous, from his fancy'd height,  
And utters fate unmindful of Abdalla !

*Cali.* Far be such black ingratitude from Cali ;  
When Asia's nations own me for their lord,  
Wealth, and command, and grandeur shall be thine.

*Abd.* Is this the recompence reserv'd for me ?  
Dar'st thou thus dally with Abdalla's passion ?

Henceforward hope no more my slighted friendship;  
Wake from thy dream of power to death and tortures,  
And bid thy visionary throne farewell.

*Cali.* Name, and enjoy thy wish——

*Abd.* I need not name it;

Aspasia's lovers know but one desire,  
Nor hope, nor wish, nor live but for Aspasia.

*Cali.* That fatal beauty, plighted to Demetrius,  
Heaven makes not mine to give.

*Abd.* Nor to deny.

*Cali.* Obtain her and possess, thou know'st thy rival.

*Abd.* Too well I know him, since on Thracia's plains  
I felt the force of his tempestuous arm,  
And saw my scatter'd squadrons fly before him.  
Nor will I trust the uncertain chance of combat;  
The rights of princes let the sword decide,  
The petty claims of empire and of honour:  
Revenge and subtle jealousy shall teach  
A surer passage to his hated heart.

*Cali.* O, spare the gallant Greek; in him we lose  
The politician's arts, and hero's flame.

*Abd.* When next we meet, before we storm the palace,  
The bowl shall circle to confirm our league,  
Then shall these juices taint Demetrius' draught,

[*Shewing a phial.*]

And stream destructive through his freezing veins:  
Thus shall he live to strike th' important blow,  
And perish ere he tastes the joys of conquest.

MAHOMET and MUSTAPHA enter.

*Mab.* Henceforth for ever happy be this day,  
Sacred to love, to pleasure, and Irene:  
The matchless fair has bless'd me with compliance;

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Let ev'ry tongue resound Irene's praise,  
And spread the general transport through mankind.

*Cali.* Blest prince, for whom indulgent Heaven ordains  
At once the joys of paradise and empire,  
Now join thy people's, and thy Cali's prayers;  
Suspend thy passage to the seats of bliss,  
Nor wish for houries in Irene's arms.

*Mab.* Forbear—I know the long-try'd faith of Cali.

*Cali.* O! could the eyes of kings, like those of Heaven,  
Search to the dark recesses of the soul,  
Oft would they find ingratitude and treason,  
By smiles, and oaths, and praises, ill disguis'd.  
How rarely would they meet, in crowded courts,  
Fidelity so firm, so pure, as mine!

*Mus.* Yet ere we give our loosen'd thoughts to rapture,  
Let prudence obviate an impending danger;  
Tainted by sloth, the parent of sedition,  
The hungry Janizary burns for plunder,  
And growls in private o'er his idle sabre.

*Mab.* To still their murmurs, ere the twentieth sun  
Shall shed his beams upon the bridal bed,  
I rouse to war, and conquer for Irene.  
Then shall the Rhodian mourn his sinking towers,  
And Buda fall, and proud Vienna tremble;  
Then shall Venetia feel the Turkish power,  
And subject seas roar round their queen in vain.

*Abd.* Then seize fair Italy's delightful coast,  
To fix your standard in Imperial Rome.

*Mab.* Her sons malicious clemency shall spare,  
To form new legends, sanctify new crimes,  
To canonize the slaves of superstition,  
And fill the world with follies and impostures,  
Till angry Heaven shall mark them out for ruin,



And war o'erwhelm them in their dream of vice.  
 O, could her fabled saints, and boasted pray'rs  
 Call forth her ancient heroes to the field,  
 How should I joy, 'midst the fierce shock of nations,  
 To cross the tow'rings of an equal soul,  
 And bid the master genius rule the world.  
 Abdalla, Cali, go—proclaim my purpose.

[*Exeunt Cali and Abdalla.*]

*Mab.* Still Cali lives; and must he live to-morrow?  
 That fawning villain's forc'd congratulations  
 Will cloud my triumphs, and pollute the day.

*Mus.* With cautious vigilance, at thy command,  
 Two faithful captains, Hasan and Caraza,  
 Pursue him through his labyrinths of treason,  
 And wait your summons to report his conduct.

*Mab.* Call them—but let them not prolong their tale,  
 Nor press too much upon a lover's patience.

[*Exit Mustapha.*]

*Mab.* [*Solus.*] Whome'er the hope, still blasted, still re-  
 new'd,

Of happiness, lures on from toil to toil,  
 Remember Mahomet, and cease thy labour.  
 Behold him here, in love, in war successful,  
 Behold him wretched in his double triumph;  
 His fav'rite faithless, and his mistress base.  
 Ambition only gave her to my arms,  
 By reason not convinc'd, nor won by love.  
 Ambition was her crime, but meaner folly  
 Dooms me to loath at once, and dote on falsehood,  
 And idolize th' apostate I condemn.  
 If thou art more than the gay dream of fancy,  
 More than a pleasing sound without a meaning,  
 O happiness! sure thou art all Aspasia's.

MUSTAPHA, HASAN, and CARAZA enter.

*Mab.* Caraza, speak—have ye remark'd the Bassa?

*Car.* Close, as we might unseen, we watch'd his steps;  
His air disorder'd, and his gait unequal,  
Betray'd the wild emotions of his mind.  
Sudden he stops, and inward turns his eyes,  
Absorb'd in thought; then, starting from his trance,  
Constrains a sullen smile, and shoots away.  
With him Abdalla we beheld——

*Mus.* Abdalla!

*Mab.* He wears of late resentment on his brow,  
Deny'd the government of Servia's province.

*Car.* We mark'd him storming in excess of fury,  
And heard, within the thicket that conceal'd us,  
An undistinguish'd sound of threat'ning rage.

*Mus.* How guilt once harbour'd in the conscious breast,  
Intimidates the brave, degrades the great!  
See Cali, dread of kings, and pride of armies,  
By treason levell'd with the dregs of men!  
Ere guilty fear depress'd the hoary chief,  
An angry murmur, a rebellious frown,  
Had stretch'd the fiery boaster in the grave.

*Mab.* Shall monarchs fear to draw the sword of justice,  
Aw'd by the crowd, and by their slaves restrain'd?  
Seize him this night, and through the private passage  
Convey him to the prison's inmost depths,  
Reserv'd to all the pangs of tedious death.

[*Exeunt Mahomet and Mustapha.*]

*Hasan.* Shall then the Greeks, unpunish'd and conceal'd,

Contrive perhaps the ruin of our empire?  
League with our chiefs, and propagate sedition?

*Car.* Whate'er their scheme, the Bassa's death defeats it,  
And gratitude's strong ties restrain my tongue.

*Hasan.* What ties to slaves? what gratitude to foes?

*Car.* In that black day when slaughter'd thousands fell  
Around these fatal walls, the tide of war  
Bore me victorious onward, where Demetrius  
Tore unresisted from the giant hand  
Of stern Sebalias the triumphant crescent,  
And dash'd the might of Asem from the ramparts.  
There I became, nor blush to make it known,  
The captive of his sword. The coward Greeks,  
Enrag'd by wrongs, exulting with success,  
Doom'd me to die with all the Turkish captains;  
But brave Demetrius scorn'd the mean revenge,  
And gave me life —

*Hasan.* Do thou repay the gift,  
Lest unrewarded mercy lose its charms.  
Profuse of wealth, or bounteous of success,  
When Heaven bestows the privilege to bless,  
Let no weak doubt the gen'rous hand restrain,  
For when was power beneficent in vain?

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT V. SCENE I.

ASPASIA *sola.*

*Aspasia.*

IN these dark moments of suspended fate,  
While yet the future fortune of my country  
Lies in the womb of Providence conceal'd,  
And anxious angels wait the mighty birth,  
O, grant thy sacred influence, powerful Virtue!  
Attention rise, survey the fair creation,



Till, conscious of th' encircling deity,  
 Beyond the mists of care thy pinion towers.  
 This calm, these joys, dear Innocence! are thine;  
 Joys ill exchange'd for gold, and pride, and empire.

*IRENE and Attendants enter.*

*Irene.* See how the moon through all th' unclouded sky,  
 Spreads her mild radiance, and descending dews  
 Revive the languid flowers; thus Nature shone  
 New from the maker's hand, and fair array'd  
 In the bright colours of primæval spring;  
 When purity, while fraud was yet unknown,  
 Play'd fearless in th' inviolated shades.  
 This elemental joy, this gen'ral calm,  
 Is sure the smile of unoffended Heaven.  
 Yet! why——

*Maid.* Behold, within th' embow'ring grove  
 Aspasia stands——

*Irene.* With melancholy mien,  
 Pensive, and envious of Irene's greatness.  
 Steal unperceiv'd upon her meditations——  
 But see, the lofty maid, at our approach,  
 Resumes th' imperious air of haughty virtue.  
 Are these th' unceasing joys, th' unmingled pleasures,  
[To Aspasia.]

For which Aspasia scorn'd the Turkish crown?  
 Is this th' unshaken confidence in Heaven?  
 Is this the boasted bliss of conscious virtue?  
 When did content sigh out her cares in secret?  
 When did felicity repine in deserts?

*Asp.* Ill suits with guilt the gaities of triumph;  
 When daring vice insults eternal justice,

The ministers of wrath forget compassion,  
And snatch the flaming bolt with hasty hand.

*Irene.* Forbear thy threats, proud prophetess of ill,  
Vers'd in the secret counsels of the sky.

*Asp.* Forbear—but thou art sunk beneath reproach;  
In vain affected raptures flush the cheek,  
And songs of pleasure warble from the tongue,  
When fear and anguish labour in the breast,  
And all within is darkness and confusion;  
Thus on deceitful Etna's flow'ry side,  
Unfading verdure glads the roving eye,  
While secret flames, with unextinguish'd rage,  
Insatiate on her wasted entrails prey,  
And melt her treach'rous beauties into ruin.

DEMETRIUS enters.

*Dem.* Fly, fly, my love: destruction rushes on us;  
The rack expects us, and the sword pursues.

*Asp.* Is Greece deliver'd? is the tyrant fall'n?

*Dem.* Greece is no more, the prosp'rous tyrant lives,  
Reserv'd, for other lands, the scourge of Heaven.

*Asp.* Say, by what fraud, what force were you defeated?  
Betray'd by falsehood, or by crowds o'erborn?

*Dem.* The pressing exigence forbids relation.  
Abdalla——

*Asp.* Hated name! his jealous rage  
Broke out in perfidy—Oh, curs'd Aspasia!  
Born to complete the ruin of her country;  
Hide me; oh, hide me from upbraiding Greece,  
Oh, hide me from myself!

*Dem.* Be fruitless grief  
The doom of guilt alone, nor dare to seize  
The breast where virtue guards the throne of peace.

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Devolve, dear maid, thy sorrows on the wretch,  
Whose fear, or rage, or treachery betray'd us,

*Irene.* [*Aside.*] A private station may discover more;  
Then let me rid them of Irene's presence:  
Proceed, and give a loose to love and treason. [*Withdraws.*

*Asp.* Yet tell.

*Dem.* To tell, or hear, were waste of life.

*Asp.* The life, which only this design supported,  
Were now well lost, in hearing how you fail'd.

*Dem.* Or meanly fraudulent, or madly gay,  
Abdalla, while we waited near the palace,  
With ill-tim'd mirth propos'd the bowl of love;  
Just as it reach'd my lips, a sudden cry  
Urg'd me to dash it to the ground untouch'd,  
And seize my sword with disencumber'd hand.

*Asp.* What cry? The stratagem? Did then Abdalla?—

*Dem.* At once a thousand passions fir'd his cheek:  
Then all is past, he cried—and darted from us;  
Nor at the call of Cali deign'd to turn.

*Asp.* Why did you stay, deserted and betray'd?  
What more could force attempt, or art contrive?

*Dem.* Amazement seiz'd us, and the hoary Bassa  
Stood torpid in suspence; but soon Abdalla  
Return'd with force that made resistance vain,  
And bade his new confed'rates seize the traitors.  
Cali, disarm'd, was borne away to death;  
Myself escap'd, or favour'd, or neglected.

*Asp.* O Greece! renown'd for science and for wealth,  
Behold thy boasted honours snatch'd away!

*Dem.* Though disappointment blasts our general scheme,  
Yet much remains to hope. I shall not call  
The day disast'rous that secures our flight;  
Nor think that effort lost which rescues thee.



## ABDALLA enters.

*Abd.* At length the prize is mine—The haughty maid,  
That bears the fate of empires in her air,  
Henceforth shall live for me; for me alone  
Shall plume her charms, and, with attentive watch,  
Steal from Abdalla's eye the sign to smile.

*Dem.* Cease this wild roar of savage exultation;  
Advance, and perish in the frantic boast.

*Asp.* Forbear, Demetrius, 'tis Aspasia calls thee;  
Thy love, Aspasia, calls; restrain thy sword;  
Nor rush on useless wounds with idle courage.

*Dem.* What now remains?

*Asp.* It now remains to fly!

*Dem.* Shall then the savage live, to boast his insult?  
Tell how Demetrius shunn'd his single hand,  
And stole his life and mistress from his sabre?

*Abd.* Infatuate loiterer! has fate, in vain,  
Unclasp'd his iron gripe to set thee free?  
Still dost thou flutter in the jaws of death,  
Snar'd with thy fears, and maz'd in stupefaction?

*Dem.* Forgive, my fair; 'tis life, 'tis nature calls.  
Now, traitor, feel the fear that chills my hand.

*Asp.* 'Tis madness to provoke superfluous danger,  
And cowardice to dread the boast of folly.

*Abd.* Fly, wretch, while yet my pity grants thee flight;  
The power of Turkey waits upon my call.  
Leave but this maid, resign a hopeless claim,  
And drag away thy life in scorn and safety,  
Thy life, too mean a prey to lure Abdalla.

*Dem.* Once more I dare thy sword; behold the prize,  
Behold I quit her to the chance of battle.

[Quitting Aspasia.]

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*Abd.* Well may'st thou call thy master to the combat,  
And try the hazard, that hast nought to stake ;  
Alike my death or thine is gain to thee ;  
But soon thou shalt repent : another moment  
Shall throw th' attending Janizaries round thee. [*Exit hastily.*

*Irene.* Abdalla fails ; now fortune all is mine. [*Aside.*  
Haste, Murza, to the palace ; let the sultan

[*To one of her Attendants.*

Dispatch his guards to stop the flying traitors,  
While I protract their stay. Be swift and faithful.

[*Exit Murza.*

This lucky stratagem shall charm the sultan, [*Aside.*  
Secure his confidence, and fix his love.

*Dem.* Behold a boaster's worth ! Now snatch, my fair,  
The happy moment, hasten to the shore,  
Ere he return with thousands at his side.

*Asp.* In vain I listen to th' inviting call  
Of freedom and of love : my trembling joints,  
Relax'd with fear, refuse to bear me forward.  
Depart, Demetrius, lest my fate involve thee ;  
Forsake a wretch abandon'd to despair,  
To share the miseries herself has caus'd.

*Dem.* Let us not struggle with th' eternal will,  
Nor languish o'er irreparable ruins ;  
Come, haste, and live—Thy innocence and truth  
Shall bless our wand'rings, and propitiate Heaven.

*Irene.* Press not her flight, while yet her feeble nerves  
Refuse their office, and uncertain life  
Still labours with imaginary woe ;  
Here let me tend her with officious care,  
Watch each unquiet flutter of the breast,  
And joy to feel the vital warmth return,

To see the cloud forsake her kindling cheek,  
And hail the rosy dawn of rising health.

*Asp.* Oh! rather scornful of flagitious greatness,  
Resolve to share our dangers and our toils,  
Companion of our flight, illustrious exile;  
Leave slav'ry, guilt, and infamy behind.

*Irene.* My soul attends thy voice, and banish'd virtue  
Strives to regain her empire of the mind:  
Assist her efforts with thy strong persuasion;  
Sure 'tis the happy hour ordain'd above,  
When vanquish'd vice shall tyrannize no more.

*Dem.* Remember, peace and anguish are before thee,  
And honour and reproach, and heaven and hell.

*Asp.* Content with freedom, and precarious greatness.

*Dem.* Now make thy choice, while yet the power of choice  
Kind Heaven affords thee, and inviting mercy  
Holds out her hand to lead thee back to truth.

*Irene.* Stay—in this dubious twilight of conviction,  
The gleams of reason, and the clouds of passion,  
Irradiate and obscure my breast by turns:  
Stay but a moment, and prevailing truth  
Will spread resistless light upon my soul.

*Dem.* But since none knows the danger of a moment,  
And Heaven forbids to lavish life away,  
Let kind compulsion terminate the contest. [*Seizing her hand.*]  
Ye Christian captives, follow me to freedom:  
A galley waits us, and the winds invite.

*Irene.* Whence is this violence?

*Dem.* Your calmer thought  
Will teach a gentler term.

*Irene.* Forbear this rudeness,  
And learn the rev'rence due to Turkey's queen:  
Fly, slaves, and call the sultan to my rescue.

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*Dem.* Farewell, unhappy maid: may ev'ry joy  
Be thine, that wealth can give, or guilt receive!

*Asp.* And when, contemptuous of imperial power,  
Disease shall chase the phantoms of ambition,  
May penitence attend thy mournful bed,  
And wing thy latest pray'r to pitying Heaven!

[*Exeunt Demetrius and Aspasia, with part of the  
Attendants.*]

*Irene.* [*Walks at a distance from her Attendants. After a  
pause.*]

Against the head which innocence secures,  
Insidious malice aims her darts in vain,  
Turn'd backwards by the pow'rful breath of Heaven.  
Perhaps ev'n now the lovers unpursu'd,  
Bound o'er the sparkling waves. Go, happy bark,  
Thy sacred freight shall still the raging main.  
To guide thy passage shall th' aerial spirits  
Fill all the starry lamps with double blaze;  
Th' applauding sky shall pour forth all its beams  
To grace the triumph of victorious virtue.  
While I, not yet familiar to my crimes,  
Recoil from thought, and shudder at myself.  
How am I chang'd! How lately did Irene  
Fly from the busy pleasures of her sex,  
Well pleas'd to search the treasures of remembrance,  
And live her guiltless moments o'er anew!  
Come, let us seek new pleasures in the palace,

[*To her Attendants, going off.*]

Till soft fatigue invite us to repose.

*MUSTAPHA enters, meeting, and stopping her.*

*Mus.* Fair falsehood, stay.

*Irene.* What dream of sudden power

Has taught my slave the language of command?  
Henceforth be wise, nor hope a second pardon.

*Mus.* Who calls for pardon from a wretch condemn'd?

*Irene.* Thy look, thy speech, thy action, all is wildness—  
Who charges guilt on me?

*Mus.* Who charges guilt!

Ask of thy heart; attend the voice of conscience—  
Who charges guilt! lay by this proud resentment  
That fires thy cheek, and elevates thy mien,  
Nor thus usurp the dignity of virtue.  
Review this day.

*Irene.* Whate'er thy accusation,  
The sultan is my judge.

*Mus.* That hope is past;  
Hard was the strife of justice and of love;  
But now 'tis o'er, and justice has prevail'd.  
Know'st thou not Cali? Know'st thou not Demetrius?

*Irene.* Bold slave, I know them both—I know them  
traitors.

*Mus.* Perfidious!—yes—too well thou know'st them  
traitors.

*Irene.* Their treason throws no stain upon Irene.  
This day has prov'd my fondness for the sultan;  
He knew Irene's truth.

*Mus.* The sultan knows it,  
He knows how near apostacy to treason—  
But 'tis not mine to judge—I scorn and leave thee.  
I go, lest vengeance urge my hand to blood,  
To blood, too mean to stain a soldier's sabre. [Exit.

*Irene.* [To her Attendants.] Go, blust'ring slave.—He has  
not heard of Murza.

That dext'rous message frees me from suspicion.

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HASAN and CARAZA enter, with Mutes, who throw the Black Robe upon Irene, and make signs to her Attendants to withdraw.

Hasan. Forgive, fair excellence, th' unwilling tongue,  
The tongue, that, forc'd by strong necessity,  
Bids beauty, such as thine, prepare to die.

Irene. What wild mistake is this? Take hence with speed  
Your robe of mourning, and your dogs of death.  
Quick from my sight, you inauspicious monsters,  
Nor dare henceforth to shock Irene's walks.

Hasan. Alas! they come, commanded by the sultan,  
Th' un pitying ministers of Turkish justice,  
Nor dare to spare the life his frown condemns.

Irene. Are these the rapid thunderbolts of war,  
That pour with sudden violence on kingdoms,  
And spread their flames resistless o'er the world?  
What sleepy charms benumb these active heroes,  
Depress their spirits, and retard their speed,  
Beyond the fear of ling'ring punishment?—  
Aspasia now, within her lover's arms,  
Securely sleeps, and, in delightful dreams,  
Smiles at the threat'nings of defeated rage.

Car. We come, bright virgin, though relenting nature,  
Shrinks at the hated task, for thy destruction;  
When, summon'd by the sultan's clam'rous fury,  
We ask'd, with tim'rous tongue, th' offender's name,  
He struck his tortur'd breast, and roar'd—Irene:  
We started at the sound, again enquir'd,  
Again his thund'ring voice return'd—Irene.

Irene. Whence is this rage? What barb'rous tongue has  
wrong'd me?  
What fraud misleads him? Or what crimes incense?



*Hasan.* Expiring Cali nam'd Irene's chamber,  
The place appointed for his master's death.

*Irene.* Irene's chamber! From my faithful bosom  
Far be the thought—But hear my protestation.

*Car.* 'Tis ours, alas! to punish, not to judge;  
Not call'd to try the cause, we heard the sentence,  
Ordain'd the mournful messengers of death.

*Irene.* Some ill designing statesman's base intrigue!  
Some cruel stratagem of jealous beauty!  
Perhaps yourselves, the villains that defame me,  
Now haste to murder, ere returning thought  
Recall th' extorted doom.—It must be so,  
Confess your crime, or lead me to the sultan;  
There dauntless truth shall blast the vile accuser,  
Then shall you feel what language cannot utter,  
Each piercing torture, every change of pain,  
That vengeance can invent, or pow'r inflict.

*ABDALLA enters; he stops short and listens.*

*Abd.* [*Aside.*] All is not lost, Abdalla; see the queen,  
See the last witness of thy guilt and fear,  
Enrob'd in death—Dispatch her, and be great.

*Car.* Unhappy fair! compassion calls upon me  
To check this torrent of imperious rage;  
While unavailing anger crowds thy tongue  
With idle threats and fruitless exclamation,  
The fraudulent moments ply their silent wings,  
And steal thy life away. Death's horrid angel  
Already shakes his bloody sabre o'er thee.  
The raging sultan burns till our return,  
Curses the dull delays of ling'ring mercy,  
And thinks his fatal mandates ill obey'd.

*Abd.* Is then your sov'reign's life so cheaply rated,

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That thus you parly with detected treason ?  
Should she prevail to gain the sultan's presence,  
Soon might her tears engage a lover's credit ;  
Perhaps her malice might transfer the charge,  
Perhaps her pois'nous tongue might blast Abdalla.

*Irene.* O, let me but be heard, nor fear from me  
Or flights of power, or projects of ambition.  
My hopes, my wishes, terminate in life,—  
A little life for grief, and for repentance.

*Abd.* I mark'd her wily messenger afar,  
And saw him skulking in the closest walks :  
I guess'd her dark designs, and warn'd the sultan ;  
And bring her former sentence new confirm'd.

*Hasan.* Then call it not our cruelty, nor crime,  
Deem us not deaf to woe, nor blind to beauty,  
That thus constrain'd we speed the stroke of death.

[*Beckons the Mutes.*

*Irene.* O name not death ! distraction and amazement,  
Horror and agony, are in that sound !  
Let me but live, heap woes on woes upon me,  
Hide me with murd'ers in the dungeon's gloom,  
Send me to wander on some pathless shore,  
Let shame and hooting infamy pursue me,  
Let slav'ry harass, and let hunger gripe.

*Car.* Could we reverse the sentence of the sultan,  
Our pleading bosoms plead Irene's cause.  
But cries and tears are vain, prepare with patience  
To meet that fate we can delay no longer.

[*The Mutes at the sign lay hold of her.*

*Abd.* Dispatch, ye ling'ring slaves, or nimbler hands  
Quick at my call shall execute your charge ;  
Dispatch, and learn a fitter time for pity.

*Irene.* Grant me one hour ; O grant me but a moment,

And bounteous Heaven repay the mighty mercy  
With peaceful death, and happiness eternal.

*Car.* The pray'r I cannot grant—I dare not hear.  
Short be thy pains. [Signs again to the Mutes.]

*Irene.* Unutterable anguish!  
Guilt and despair! pale spectres grin around me,  
And stun me with the yellings of damnation!  
O, hear my prayers!—Accept, all-pitying Heaven,  
These tears, these pangs, these last remains of life,  
Nor let the crimes of this detested day  
Be charg'd upon my soul. O, mercy! mercy!

[Mutes force her out.]

*Abd.* [Aside.] Safe in her death, and in Demetrius' flight,  
Abdalla, bid thy troubled breast be calm;  
Now shalt thou shine the darling of the sultan,  
The plot all Cali's, the detection thine.

*Hasan.* [To *Car.*] Does not thy bosom, for I know thee  
tender,

A stranger to th' oppressor's savage joy,  
Melt at Irene's fate, and share her woes?

*Car.* Her piercing cries yet fill the loaded air,  
Dwell on my ear, and sadden all my soul;  
But let us try to clear our clouded brows,  
And tell the horrid tale with cheerful face;  
The stormy sultan rages at our stay.

*Abd.* Frame your report with circumspective art,  
Inflame her crimes, exalt your own obedience,  
But let no thoughtless hint involve Abdalla.

*Car.* What need of caution to report the fate  
Of her the sultan's voice condemn'd to die?  
Or why should he, whose violence of duty  
Has serv'd his prince so well, demand our silence?

*Abd.* Perhaps my zeal too fierce betray'd my prudence;

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Perhaps my warmth exceeded my commission;  
Perhaps I will not stoop to plead my cause;  
Or argue with the slave that sav'd Demetrius.

*Car.* From his escape learn thou the power of virtue,  
Nor hope his fortune while thou want'st his worth.

*Hasan.* The sultan comes, still gloomy, still enrag'd.

MAHOMET and MUSTAPHA enter.

*Mab.* Where's this fair trait'ress? Where's this smiling mischief?

Whom neither vows could fix, nor favours bind?

*Hasan.* Thine orders, mighty sultan! are perform'd,  
And all Irene now is breathless clay.

*Mab.* Your hasty zeal defrauds the claim of justice,  
And disappointed vengeance burns in vain;  
I came to heighten tortures by reproach,  
And add new terrors to the face of death.

Was this the maid whose love I bought with empire?  
True, she was fair; the smile of innocence  
Play'd on her cheek—So shone the first apostate—  
Irene's chamber! Did not roaring Cali,  
Just as the rack forc'd out his struggling soul,  
Name for the scene of death Irene's chamber?

*Mus.* His breath prolong'd but to detect her treason,  
Then in short sighs forsook his broken frame.

*Mab.* Decreed to perish in Irene's chamber!  
There had she lull'd me with endearing falsehoods,  
Clasp'd in her arms, or slumb'ring on her breast,  
And bar'd my bosom to the ruffian's dagger.

MURZA enters.

*Murza.* Forgive, great sultan! that by fate prevented,  
I bring a tardy message from Irene.

*Mab.* Some artful wile of counterfeited love !  
Some soft decoy to lure me to destruction !  
And thou, the curs'd accomplice of her treason,  
Declare thy message, and expect thy doom.

*Murza.* The queen requested, that a chosen troop  
Might intercept the traitor Greek, Demetrius,  
Then ling'ring with his captive mistress here.

*Mus.* The Greek, Demetrius ! whom th' expiring Bassa  
Declar'd the chief associate of his guilt.

*Mab.* A chosen troop—to intercept—Demetrius—  
The Queen requested—Wretch, repeat the message ;  
And if one varied accent prove thy falsehood,  
Or but one moment's pause betray confusion,  
Those trembling limbs—Speak out, thou shiv'ring traitor.

*Murza.* The queen requested——

*Mab.* Who ? the dead Irene ?  
Was she then guiltless ! Has my thoughtless rage  
Destroy'd the fairest workmanship of Heaven ?  
Doom'd her to death unpity'd and unheard,  
Amidst her kind solitudes for me ?  
Ye slaves of cruelty, ye tools of rage,

[To Hassan and Caraza.

Ye blind officious ministers of folly,  
Could not her prayers, her innocence, and tears,  
Suspend the dreadful sentence for an hour ?  
One hour had freed me from the fatal error ;  
One hour had sav'd me from despair and madness.

*Car.* Your fierce impatience forc'd us from your presence,  
Urg'd us to speed, and bade us banish pity,  
Nor trust our passions with her fatal charms.

*Mab.* What hadst thou lost by slighting those commands ?  
Thy life perhaps—Were but Irene spar'd,  
Well if a thousand lives like thine had perish'd ;

Such beauty, sweetness, love, were cheaply bought,  
With half the grov'ling slaves that load the globe.

*Mus.* Great is thy woe! but think, illustrious sultan,  
Such ills are sent for souls like thine to conquer.  
Shake off this weight of unavailing grief,  
Rush to the war, display thy dreadful banners,  
And lead thy troops victorious round the world.

*Mab.* Robb'd of the maid with whom I wish'd to triumph,  
No more I burn for fame or for dominion;  
Success and conquest now are empty sounds;  
Remorse and anguish seize on all my breast;  
Those groves, whose shades embower'd the dear Irene,  
Heard her last cries, and fann'd her dying beauties,  
Shall hide me from the tasteless world for ever.

[*Mahomet goes back, and returns.*]

Yet ere I quit the sceptre of dominion,  
Let one just act conclude the hateful day:  
Hew down, ye guards, those vassals of distraction,

[*Pointing to Hasan and Caraza.*]

Those hounds of blood, that catch the hint to kill,  
Bear off with eager haste the unfinish'd sentence,  
And speed the stroke, lest mercy should o'ertake them.

*Car.* Then hear, great Mahomet, the voice of truth.

*Mab.* Hear! shall I hear thee? didst thou hear Irene?

*Car.* Hear but a moment.

*Mab.* Hadst thou heard a moment,  
Thou might'st have liv'd, for thou had'st spar'd Irene.

*Car.* I heard her, pitied her, and wish'd to save her.

*Mab.* And wish'd—Be still thy fate to wish in vain.

*Car.* I heard, and softened, till Abdalla brought  
Her final doom, and hurried her destruction.

*Mab.* Abdalla brought her doom! Abdalla brought it!  
The wretch, whose guilt declar'd by tortur'd Cali,



My rage and grief had hid from my remembrance,  
Abdalla brought her doom!

*Hasam.* Abdalla brought it,  
While she yet begg'd to plead her cause before thee.

*Mab.* O seize me, madness—Did she call on me?  
I feel, I see the ruffian's barb'rous rage.  
He seiz'd her melting in the fond appeal,  
And stopp'd the heavenly voice that call'd on me.  
My spirits fail, awhile support me, vengeance—  
Be just, ye slaves, and, to be just, be cruel;  
Contrive new racks, imbitter every pang,  
Inflict whatever treason can deserve,  
Which murder'd innocence that call'd on me.

[*Exit Mahomet.* Abdalla is dragg'd off.

MURZA enters.

*Mus.* [*To Murza.*] What plagues, what tortures are in  
store for thee, 7 JUL 52  
Thou sluggish idler, dilatory slave?  
Behold the model of consummate beauty,  
Torn from the mourning earth by thy neglect.

*Murza.* Such was the will of heaven—A band of Greeks  
That mark'd my course, suspicious of my purpose,  
Rush'd out and seiz'd me, thoughtless and unarm'd,  
Breathless, amaz'd, and on the guarded beach  
Detain'd me till Demetrius set me free.

*Mus.* So sure the fall of greatness rais'd on crimes,  
So fix'd the justice of all-conscious heaven.  
When haughty guilt exults with impious joy  
Mistake shall blast, or accident destroy;  
Weak man with erring rage may throw the dart,  
But Heaven shall guide it to the guilty heart.

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## EPHLOGUE.

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*MARRY a Turk! a haughty, tyrant king,  
Who thinks us women born to dress and sing  
To please his fancy—see no other man—  
Let him persuade me to it—if he can :  
Besides, he has fifty wives ; and who can bear  
To have the fiftieth part her paltry share ?*

*'Tis true, the fellow's handsome, strait and tall ;  
But how the devil should he please us all ?  
My swain is little—true—but be it known,  
My pride's to have that little all my own.  
Men will be ever to their errors blind,  
Where woman's not allow'd to speak her mind ;  
I swear this eastern pageantry is nonsense,  
And for one man—one wife's enough in conscience.*

*In vain proud man usurps what's woman's due ;  
For us alone, they honour's paths pursue :  
Inspir'd by us, they glory's heights ascend ;  
Woman the source, the object, and the end.  
Though wealth, and power, and glory they receive,  
These all are trifles, to what we can give.  
For us the statesman labours, hero fights,  
Bears toilsome days, and wakes long tedious nights ;  
And when blest peace has silenc'd war's alarms,  
Receives his full reward in beauty's arms.*

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7 JUL 52



